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## Address

Delivered at the Opening of the School-Year in Concordia Theological  
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DEAR STUDENTS OF THE SEMINARY, RESPECTED MEMBERS OF THE  
FACULTY AND OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL, KIND FRIENDS OF  
OUR INSTITUTION:

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." These words of the 121st Psalm come to my mind as I am about to speak the first word at the beginning of our new scholastic year, the 102d year in the history of our institution. I know of no better watchword for our students and for our instructors in these very serious and distressing times in the world, which affect also our Church and may affect our institution to a lesser or greater degree. Let us all make it a matter of our daily thought and prayer. Then we can also rest assured that the gracious promise contained in the same psalm will become true with us: "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even forevermore." And then we shall also be able to keep that equanimity and composure in these abnormal, critical, and exciting times which is our Christian duty and which is so necessary for the task set before us in this scholastic year.

What is that task? What should be our aim and goal? What should be *your* desire and purpose, my dear students—you who are now entering a new phase of your life and are beginning the study of theology and you who have been with us one or two years and are continuing or ending your theological studies as far as our Seminary is involved?

Permit me to call your attention to a word of St. Paul in the third chapter of his Letter to the Ephesians, a very brief word

and therefore easily to be remembered, but containing a wealth of thought. St. Paul, a bondman of Jesus Christ, a prisoner on account of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in a beautiful prayer for his Christians at Ephesus, wishes them "to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," or as Luther has translated the words in the German Bible, to know, *dass Christum liebhaben viel besser ist denn alles Wissen*. He mentions two things, *knowledge and love of Christ*; he compares, as it were, these two things, and he exalts the love of Christ and places it above knowledge.

St. Paul knew of both things by experience; he knew of knowledge, and he knew of the love of Christ. He was a highly educated man and is also in this respect an example to those who would become ministers of the Gospel, highly educated in Hebrew and Greek wisdom and learning. In Hebrew wisdom Gamaliel of Jerusalem had been his teacher, perhaps the foremost scholar of that age in this particular field. With regard to his Greek learning, he was born and educated in Tarsus in Cilicia in Asia Minor, in those days a flourishing center of Greek wisdom and knowledge. His letters indicate to some extent his learning, as he readily quotes Greek poets, even such writers as were of less renown; his letters also indicate his mastery of style and his powerful rhetoric, so that one of the foremost Greek scholars of modern times, not a theologian, calls him the "classical writer of the Hellenistic age," "*der Klassiker des Hellenismus*" (Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf). His letters indicate that he is well acquainted with the philosophical trends of his time, and without entering into a more detailed discussion of his knowledge and of the ramified meaning of that term applied in his letters, suffice it to say that he uses the Greek words for knowledge and wisdom, *γνῶσις* and *σοφία*, not less than 53 times in his letters.

But above all he knew and valued the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. And when he speaks of the love of Christ, he refers in general to that love which Christ has shown to mankind in His work of redemption, in His vicarious death for sinful, lost, and condemned humanity; and according to the context of our passage he refers especially to that incomprehensible and unlimited love of Christ shown in the founding, in the building, and in the conservation of the Church; that love of Christ which takes away the stony heart of man, gives a new heart and a new spirit, and kindles that love towards Christ which exclaims: "My Lord and my God, my Savior and my Redeemer!" And therefore St. Paul states in another passage: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ and be found in Him."

You, my young friends, are here in quest of knowledge, a beautiful thing. I do not know of anything human more inspiring than to see such a great number of young men striving after knowledge. If any one does not want to learn, our Seminary is not the place for him. You newcomers have up to the present time striven rather after general knowledge. Keep up this striving, continue in the quest for knowledge. But at the present time be earnest and conscientious in your quest for *theological* knowledge and make it a point to start in the proper way and frame of mind. You men of the second and third year, continue, I beg of you, faithfully in what you have begun. You Seniors were away for a year; most of you have done practical church-work, and I trust that you have been much benefited by it and have also learned that you still lack considerable knowledge. Keep up this quest after theological knowledge; keep it up also in the ministry; take time for it; be active and interested in every branch of your work; do not lose time; do not waste time, the most valuable temporal gift, but, according to St. Paul's exhortation in this very letter from which our passage is taken, ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρὸν, redeem the time, *schicket euch in die Zeit*, literally, buy up the time, because the days are evil; and avoid as much as possible the multifarious activities, keep in our seminary life the extracurricular activities at a minimum. And then perhaps you will say as one of the scholars of modern times, an intimate friend of the fathers and founders of our Church (*Franz Delitzsch*), said when he was in his seventies: "I learn and see every day how little I know."

But above all things remember and learn to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. What does that imply and mean? Nothing merely emotional,—you will hear in the course of your studies more about emotional theology and religion, *Gefuehlstheologie*,—but it means love that proceeds from knowledge of, and faith in, Christ, of His person and of His redemptive work, as St. Paul explains: "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." Such love entails a personal relationship expressed in the words "Thou, O Lord, art mine and I am Thine."

I am Thine because Thou gavest  
Life and blood For my good,  
By Thy death me savest.  
Thou art mine; I love and own Thee;  
Ne'er shall I, Light of joy  
From my heart dethrone Thee.

"Nearer, my God, to Thee; . . . nearer, O Christ, to Thee."

This is expected of you who are preparing for the ministry. For when St. Peter after his denial of Christ is recommissioned to

his office of feeding the lambs and sheep of Christ, the Master asks him three times: "Lovest thou Me?"

How is such love accomplished and attained? Let us eliminate and cast aside all human ideas and sentiments. The Lord Himself gives and creates such love through His Word. The Word of Christ and the love of Christ are closely related to each other, as the Lord Himself tells us: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." "If a man love me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make Our abode with him." And such love will show itself in our daily life, in faithful performance of our daily tasks and duties and in shunning the love of the world and the things that are in the world, "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. . . . The world passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

St. Paul closes one of his letters with the very earnest and weighty words "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema. Maranatha." Maranatha — our Bible does not translate this peculiar word. It was a familiar saying and greeting among the Christians of the apostolic days, meaning as much as, The Lord cometh, or, Lord, come. Maranatha! The Lord is coming! The things occurring today in this war-torn, war-mad world are, in the terms of Scripture, a coming of the Lord; they are, so to speak, the forerunners, the harbingers, of the final coming of the Lord. Let us begin our work, and continue with our work, believing and praying, Maranatha, and praying in the last words on the last page of our Bible: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen."

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Before closing I should like to make a few announcements that must make us truly thankful to the Lord of the Church and the Giver of all good things. Our new dean-elect, the Reverend Richard A. Jesse, is with us, has already begun to perform the duties of his office, and will be formally installed in a special service in the near future. In the name of the Faculty, of the student-body, and of the Board of Control I bid him a most cordial welcome, and I am certain that all will join me in the wish and in the prayer that God, according to His grace, may bless him abundantly in his work and make him a blessing for our Church in general and for our institution in particular.

Since we have to instruct four classes this year, the Board of Directors of Synod has granted us the assistance of the Rev. Adolph T. Koehler as an instructor for the first semester. He is an alumnus of our Seminary, went to China in 1931 as a missionary of our Church, has taught at the seminary for native students in Hankow, and has not as yet been able to return to China. I bid



him a cordial welcome and assure him of our good wishes and prayers.

Our former dean, Dr. John H. C. Fritz, has now relinquished his office, which he filled in so efficient and faithful a manner for the past twenty years, and will devote all his time to his lecture work in the very important branch of Homiletics, the art of preaching. Once more we thank him for his most excellent service to our institution for so many years and bespeak for him God's blessing in his field of labor, which is already quite familiar to him.

Our Professor Frederick E. Mayer has rounded out twenty-five years in the service of our Church, first as pastor of churches in Central Illinois, then as instructor in our sister institution at Springfield, and for the last three years as professor of theology in our Seminary. We all rejoice that the Lord has blessed him so richly in his work, and we implore the Head of the Church that He will continue to bless him, and we say with David: "Thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed forever."

L. FUEBRINGER

## Reason or Revelation?

(Concluded)

Satan's paramour is the mistress of a thousand wiles. We cannot conclude this study of the evils of rationalism without studying the more subtle methods by which Satan would beguile us and lead us away from the truth of Christ and the certainty of His Word. If he cannot get us to falsify the Word, he will aim to keep us from applying the Word, from exercising our faith, from putting our sole reliance on the teaching of Scripture and the promise of the Gospel.

One of the wiles which Satan's paramour employs to keep us away from the Word and to install herself as the mistress of theology is to exhibit herself as the defender of the truth of the Christian religion. Marshaling a great array of rational proofs for it and overstressing their value, she aims to win men for the idea that reason is superior to revelation. We are speaking of Christian apologetics and its abuse at the hands of Satan's paramour. Apologetics is a legitimate branch of Christian theology.<sup>1)</sup> It

1) We are not speaking of the illegitimate apologetics employed by the English deists, the old rationalists, and now by the Modernists for the purpose of demonstrating "the reasonableness of Christianity." We do not agree with Georgia Harkness's judgment "It merits high respect." (*The Faith by which the Church Lives*, p. 58.) Such apologetics serves no good purpose. Making Christianity "reasonable" is divesting it of its essential teachings. The doctrine of Christ is "reasonable" only if Christ is divested of His deity. "Resurrection" becomes "reasonable" only when it is denied.

serves a good purpose in placing before the unbeliever the "evidences of Christianity," the philosophical arguments for the existence of God, the rational proofs for the divine origin and nature of Holy Scripture (its style, its contents, the fulfilment of its prophecies, its blessed effect on individuals and nations, etc.), for immortality and an eternal life, etc. Make him listen to these arguments of reason and philosophy, and "*reasonable* reason will be forced to conclude that Holy Scripture is of divine origin and to confess that it is more reasonable to admit this than to deny it" (F. Pieper, *Chr. Dogmatik*, I:375). And if he will not admit it, his unbelief is unmasked as being not only unreasonable but also dishonest. It is dishonest for a man to pretend that intellectual difficulties stand in the way of his acceptance of the teachings of Christianity when all that stands in the way is his hatred of these teachings. And that is always the case. See John 3:20 and 5:40. The pride of the unbeliever needs to be put down. And the flesh of the Christian, which makes common cause with the scoffing unbeliever, needs the same treatment. (See Pieper, *l. cit.*, p. 376.) Apologetics serves a good purpose.

But do not attach too much importance to it. Satan's paramour would have us do that, but here, as always, she makes fools of her dupes. Those who imagine that they can win men for Christianity through rational argumentation and set out to establish the truth of any Christian teaching by proof from reason and philosophy, are engaged in futile work. These proofs cannot produce the true faith, *fides divina*. At best they can produce a *fides humana*.

At best — commonly they do not produce even this. Philosophical dissertations seem to be unable to produce firm, unwavering convictions. When men engage in disputations on the basis of reason, the disputations usually are endless. Reason has the habit of siding with both parties to an argument. Dr. Walther makes this strong statement: "Nur Gottes Wort gibt Gewissheit. Was aus der Vernunft kommt, kann auch mit der Vernunft bestritten werden." (*Proceedings, Syn. Conference*, 1884, p. 49.) When God speaks, the matter is settled. But when men agree to argue on the basis of reason, the opponent will usually have an answer to what the proponent offers as an invincible argument. No two schools of philosophy will agree. Often the philosopher will not agree with himself. Kant was able to prove and to disprove the same thing, and he is the prince of philosophers. If you think that Walther's statement "What reason asserts may also be denied by reason" is too strong, read what Francis Bowen writes in *Modern Philosophy*, p. 233 f.: "We find ourselves involved in what Kant calls the Antinomy of Pure Reason, or Conflict of Transcendental Ideas,

whereby the doctrine which we seek to establish, denominated the thesis, and its opposite, or contradictory, doctrine, denominated the antithesis, are both found to rest on demonstrative, or incontrovertible, arguments, leaving us utterly at a loss which to choose between them. Thus, we seek to prove, first, the thesis, namely, that the world had a beginning in time and is also limited in regard to space; and we succeed in doing so to our entire satisfaction. But then we are dismayed to find that the antithesis, or contradictory doctrine, that the world had no beginning in time and has no limits in space but is infinite in regard both to time and space, may also be perfectly made out by equally satisfactory arguments. . . . I will give a specimen of this fencing with contradictory arguments. The thesis that the world had a beginning in time is thus proved. . . . We prove the antithesis thus," etc. It is not worth while to write out the arguments. You may not agree with some of the argumentation. But you have seen that the philosophers agree with Walther's statement. Emil Brunner also agrees with it. "Who will prove to be right in the end, the realist or the idealist, the pantheist or deist or theist, I do not know. Nobody does know" (reason being the guide), "and I have good grounds for believing that their quarrels will remain unsettled till doomsday. For, of course, they cannot be settled. It seems to me to be characteristic of the human situation that with an equal stringency of logic you can defend one standpoint as well as the other. In any period when metaphysics is alive, it is alive in every one of its different types." (*The Word and the World*, p. 15.)

Philosophical arguments and proofs of reason do not accomplish very much in the way of producing firm convictions. What about the proofs of God's existence? "The ontological proof argues from the existence of the idea of God in man to the actuality of His existence." But if a man is not willing to believe in the existence of God, he will have a counter-argument ready. "Was aus der Vernunft kommt, kann auch mit der Vernunft bestritten werden." Joseph Stump lists and presents those arguments and adds: "None of these arguments is actually demonstrative and coercive. One who denies that there is a God cannot by means of these arguments be compelled to acknowledge God's existence." (*The Christian Faith*, p. 34.)<sup>2)</sup> L. Boettner tells us the same, partly in

2) Discussing these arguments, Dr. Pieper said: "Man muss solche Beweise fuer das Dasein Gottes nicht ueberschaetzen. Wir gruenden innerhalb der Kirche unsern Glauben an Gott nicht, und zwar auch nicht zum Teil, auf diese Beweise. Wir gebrauchen diese Beweise nur im apologetischen Interesse: wenn die urvernunftige Vernunft, sei es bei uns, sei es bei andern, sich geltend macht." (From a student's notebook.) We use them only to show that "it is more reasonable to admit than to deny" the existence of God.

the same words: "The attempt to prove the divine origin of the Bible from these external criteria is similar to that of proving the existence of God from the external world. We may cite the ontological, the teleological, the cosmological, and the moral arguments, and the evidence seems convincing enough to the believer. Yet none of these arguments are demonstrative and coercive, and they usually leave the skeptics unconvinced. When we consent to stake the authority of Scripture on external arguments, we are consenting to fight the battle on the field of our opponents' choosing, and we then simply have to make the best of a vulnerable position." (*The Inspiration of the Scriptures*, p. 83.) Georgia Harkness, professor of philosophy and a liberal theologian (now professor of Applied Theology), should be in a position to speak authoritatively on this matter. She tried out the philosophical approach and now tells us: "I do not propose to set forth a list of arguments for the existence of God. In earlier days I was prone to do this, and they may have some usefulness." "Students in college have often told me that they were intellectually convinced of the existence of God on philosophical grounds, but that the whole idea left them unmoved." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 134, 71.)

Are the philosophical arguments for the immortality of the soul demonstrative and coercive? Hase, himself a rationalist, knew all about them; the rationalists cultivated them assiduously. He says: "Because each one of these proofs may be opposed by counter-arguments, the belief in an eternal life must be based on Christ and not on philosophical demonstrations and dubious stories. You will, therefore, find a more vigorous faith in the hut of the poor peasant than in the lecture-halls of great philosophers." (See Pieper, *op. cit.*, III:619.) Cicero lets Atticus study Plato's proofs, turn away disappointed, and say: "Nescio, quomodo, dum lego, adsentior; cum posui librum et mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum coepi cogitare, adsensio omnis illa elabitur." (*Tusc. Disp.*, Lib. I.) And that represents a universal experience (Cicero then takes up the proof, and his arguments convince as little as those of Plato). Left to its own devices, reason seldom gets beyond doubt.

You do not get very far with arguments of reason. Karl Scheele, a Lutheran theologian, gives us the reason for this. "All assurance of the truth of Christianity which is based on scientific demonstration is *human work*, which can be overthrown in a moment by *other human work*. The only proof is the God-given faith." (*Die trunkene Wissenschaft*, p. 241.) And the philosopher J. H. v. Kirchmann speaks in a similar strain: "Die Fundamente, auf denen die Religionen ruhen, sind durchaus andere als die, auf welche die wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis sich stuetzt; deshalb ist es unvermeidlich, dass jede Hilfe, welche von dieser Seite der Religion

geboten wird, nur den Glauben erschuettern muss und dass, umgekehrt, jeder Angriff von seiten der Wissenschaft gegen den Inhalt der Religion an dem Gemuete des Frommen so unschaedlich abprallt wie die Hiebe mit scharfen Schwertern gegen das Spiegelbild an der Wand. Auf diesem Wege kann der Friede zwischen Religion und Philosophie nicht erreicht werden, so sehr dies auch von den Kirchenvaetern bis auf Hegel versucht worden ist." (*Katechismus der Philosophie*, p. 227.)

Rational arguments for the truth of Christianity do not, usually, produce firm, unwavering convictions. And those that do produce convictions—there are such arguments—produce at best only a human conviction, *fides humana*. But what is needed is the *fides divina*, an absolute assurance of the truth of the Christian religion that defies all the objections of philosophy and all the sneers of Satan, an assurance, moreover, that is satisfied, fully, absolutely, satisfied, with the bare word of Scripture. And how does God produce this *fides divina*? Through nothing else than the bare word of Scripture. The promise of the Gospel produces saving faith, and the faith produced by the Word is divinely convinced that the Word, every word of Scripture, is the divine truth. So if you want to gain men's assent, assent based on real conviction, to the teachings of Christianity, preach the word of Scripture to them. Preach it, proclaim it,—and your work is done. The declarations and assertions of Scripture need not be bolstered up by arguments drawn from reason. The *fides divina* is not produced, *neither is it supported*, by philosophical and scientific demonstrations. "Wir gruenden unsern Glauben nicht, und zwar auch nicht zum Teil, auf diese Beweise." We want to produce *divine* assurance in our hearers and therefore adopt St. Paul's method: "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," 1 Cor. 2:4. Apologetics has a legitimate function to perform, but never forget: "The best apology of the Christian religion is its proclamation." (See Pieper, *op. cit.*, I:123: "In diesem Sinne ist das Axiom gemeint 'Die beste Apologie der christlichen Religion ist ihre Verkuendigung.'") In case you still think that these external proofs are of some value, at least for *confirming* the Christian faith, and imagine that the axiom quoted by Pieper is the refuge of helpless orthodoxy, you should hear how theologians of the liberal school elaborate the axiom. Edwin Lewis: "The voice of the Church is prophetic. Its task is to announce, not to debate; to take its stand on the revealed will and Word of God and declare to the world what that will and Word are." "Your business as a preacher is not to prove Christian truth by much elaborate ratiocination, but to allow it through full testimony to demonstrate

the reality of its saving power." (*The Faith We Declare*, pp. 45, 227.) H. Kraemer: "To demand a rational argument for faith is to make reason, that is, man, the standard of reference for faith and ends in a vicious circle. Ultimate convictions never rest on a universally lucid and rational argument, in any philosophy and in any religion, and they never will." (*The Chr. Message*, etc., p. 107.) E. S. Jones: "Afraid that the scientist will explain away things that have become precious to us, we clasp our faith to our bosom to protect it, forgetting that *our faith does not need protection*,—it *needs proclamation*. If it is real, it is its own protection." "Jesus used no syllogisms. He announced self-verifying truths. He did not argue them but left them to argue themselves—as light appeals to the eye, . . . as love goes straight to the heart." (*The Christ on Every Road*, pp. 30, 63.) What kind of apologetics did Jesus use in dealing with the doubter? Luther: "John 3:9. *How can these things be?* Reason would like to comprehend, does not want to believe. We cannot win the unbeliever by argument, and the good cause of faith need not be upheld by demonstration. Christ here calls Nicodemus to faith and does not answer his question: 'How can these things be?'" (XI:1866.)<sup>3)</sup>

To sum up: Christian apologetics is a good thing; but when men busy themselves with the "evidences of Christianity" with the idea that they are somehow confirming the *fides divina* thereby, giving the Christian faith a needed support and winning men for the truth, they are committing a great folly. "Nur Gottes Wort gibt Gewissheit." And: "The entire apologetic activity available to us is powerless to change the human heart and win it for the Gospel of Christ." (Pieper, *op. cit.*, I:72.)

They are engaged in a futile, foolish business and, more, in an evil and harmful business. It is a subtle form of rationalism. When H. Kramer says: "To demand a rational argument for faith is to make reason, that is, man, the standard of reference for faith," he

3) We must find room here for two more fine testimonies. Marcus Dodds: "Plato philosophizes, and a few souls seem for a moment to see things more clearly; Peter preaches, and three thousand souls spring to life." (Quoted in W. H. Johnson, *Who Is This King of Glory?* p. 119.) Ph. Mauro: "I had no notion at all that intellectual difficulties and questionings could be removed in any way except by being answered, one by one, to the intellectual satisfaction of the person in whose mind they existed, but my doubts and difficulties were not met in that way. They were simply removed when I believed in the Crucified One and accepted Him as the Christ of God and as my personal Savior. The explanation of this is that the seat of *unbelief* is not in the head but in the heart, Rom. 10:9. It is the will that is wrong; and the bristling array of doubts and difficulties which spring up in the mind are mere disguises and pretexts supplied by the enemy of souls, behind which the unbelieving heart tries to shelter itself and to justify its unbelief. This is the explanation of those words of our Lord, who knew what was in man, 'Ye will not come unto Me,' John 5:40." (*The Fundamentals*, p. 112.)



is speaking of gross rationalism and the illegitimate apologetics of the gross liberals. But his words apply also, in a degree, to those who imagine that rational arguments will *help to win* men for any Christian teaching. They are asking reason to support faith. We heard L. Boettner say: "When we consent to stake the authority of Scripture on external arguments we are consenting to fight the battle on the field of our opponent's choosing." He goes on to say: "These arguments in themselves are of such a nature as to invite doubt in the unregenerate mind and they can never permanently settle the question." And now: "When we consent to fight the battle on these grounds, we are making a concession to rationalism." We are not, indeed, consenting to stake the authority of Scripture on external arguments when we use them for the purpose of showing up the unreasonableness of unbelief. But take care! If you give the impression that the truth of Scripture depends in the least degree on the validity of your rational arguments, you are making a concession to rationalism. We will have to agree with the judgment of a writer in the *Journal of the Am. Luth. Conference*, May, 1939, p. 16: "So long as you imagine that you can formulate irrefutable proofs by means of reason, you are a rationalist, whether your brain-child is dressed in the garb of orthodoxy or of Modernism."

Take care, lest you taint your apologetic work, legitimate in itself and useful, with the pride of reason and thus illegitimize it. Beware of the wiles of Satan's paramour! She would stir up our vanity and self-esteem by persuading us that we can add to the power of the Word by drawing on the resources of reason, our own resources. Our proud flesh does not like to have its noblest faculty, reason, so totally ignored. It is not willing to play the role of a pupil who simply repeats the words of the master. What, shall we, in dealing with the philosopher and with the scoffer, take the position that the one and only convincing argument is this: Scripture says so? Why, he would laugh us to scorn.<sup>4)</sup> — By all means employ Christian apologetics; employ it for the purpose of stop-

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4) Follow Luther's advice in this matter: "They say the Scriptures are much too feeble to overthrow heretics; that must be done with reasons from our brain; in that way you must prove that faith is right. Never! For our faith exceeds all reason, and it alone is God's power. Therefore, when people will not believe, keep silent; for you are under no obligation to compel them to regard the Scriptures as God's Book or Word. It is sufficient if you have taken your stand on the Scriptures. . . . When you meet with people who are so utterly blinded and hardened as to deny that this is God's Word or cast doubt upon it, just keep still; do not say a word to them and let them go. Only say this to them: I will offer you proof enough from Scripture; if you will believe it, well and good; if you will not believe it, I shall not offer you anything else. But you say: If I act thus, God's Word will make a poor showing. I say: Leave that to God!" (IX:1071 f.)



ping the mouth of the braggart. But take heed lest you yourself fall prey to the pride of reason.

And now consider the harm of attaching too much importance to apologetics. Satan's ulterior purpose in stirring up our prideful use of apologetics is to keep us away from Scripture. He would have us lay aside our chief, our only weapon of spiritual warfare or use it as little as possible. Summarizing Dr. Walther's attitude towards science as set forth in the foreword of *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 21, Dr. Pieper writes: "Science serves theology only as hand-maid; if she aspires to be more, away with her. To begin with, Scriptural theology suffers when one thinks he must help out the word of Scripture with scientific proofs." (*Op. cit.*, I:210.) It will be sufficient for our present purpose to point out, first, that such an attitude militates against the certainty and sufficiency of Scripture. Dr. Walther puts it this way: "We hate this sort of apologetics with all our heart, for it presupposes that there is something more certain than God's Word." (*Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 21, Foreword, p. 41.) And, secondly, the more time we devote to scientific demonstration, the less time we have for Gospel-proclamation. There must be time given to apologetics, but give it sparingly! The one thing that counts is Scripture. And Satan would have us use Scripture sparingly. And any neglect of Scripture results in harm to theology and the good cause of faith.<sup>5)</sup>

5) Speaking of Christian apologetics, where do those belong who defend the inerrancy of Scripture not on the basis of the claim of Scripture to that effect but on the basis of scientific investigation? Christian apologetics, as we have seen, does not presume to establish the truth of the Christian teachings but, accepting the truth on the basis of Scripture, shows the unreasonableness of the objections of reason. The illegitimate apologetics of the rationalists consists in making the "Christian" teachings palatable to reason and calls for the acceptance of these "Christian" teachings because of their reasonableness. Now, why do we teach that Scripture does not, and cannot, contain any error? Because Scripture says so. There are theologians, however, who, while teaching the inerrancy of Scripture, will not proclaim its inerrability. They will not admit *a priori* that all of Scripture is infallible. Whether the historical, scientific, and similar statements of Scripture are true needs to be investigated and established by the painstaking research of the theologian. They find, usually, that Scripture is right, and they are ready to proclaim the inerrancy of Scripture—because they have scientific proof for that. We shall have to say that such a procedure is not legitimate apologetics but verges closely on the rationalistic kind of apologetics. We, too, make it our business to apply the most painstaking historical research when any historical statement of Scripture is questioned. We do it for the purpose named above, never with the idea that Scripture and any statement of Scripture needs scientific confirmation. What do you think of the following statements? The article "The Bible as the Word of God," published in the *Journal of the Am. Luth. Conference*, Dec., 1938, states: "I believe that it will be possible (partly now, ever increasingly, some day perhaps fully) to prove that the historical record in which God's revelation in the narrower sense is embedded is, as we now have it, substantially true; that it is found true in its contacts with secular history;

This does not exhaust the armory of the old evil Foe. He is the master of a thousand "wiles" (Eph. 6:11 — "expert methods"). He would keep us away from the Word by the more indirect method just examined. But he also employs more direct methods, methods fraught with infinitely greater peril. He employs the blandishments and plausibilities of carnal reasoning to keep faith from grasping the Word, to keep us from believing. In the opening paragraph of this study we said: "In our spiritual struggles we are inclined to heed the insidious logic of reason more than the sure Word of Scripture, the certain promise of the Gospel." (P. 322.) Let us study four of these Satanic wiles in order to realize the mortal danger of subtle rationalism.

There is the matter of Christian prayer. We have God's gracious promise that He will hear our prayer for Jesus' sake. He assures us that He rules the world in our interest. He pledges Himself to do the impossible in order to help us. But Satan's

that it is found true in the light of archeological discoveries; . . . that for every seeming discrepancy there is a possible solution, a solution even probable in most instances, which squares fully with the high claims made by Scripture for its own trustworthiness. . . ." That is substantially correct. (We object only to such phrases as "*substantially true*.") But what of this? "There are two parts to the Bible — the human framework, or the body, and the divine soul, which is the revelation of God and of His will and Word in Christ. Let us look at these two parts one at a time. *How can we know that the human framework of the Bible is true — the history, the geography, the biography, the science . . . ?* We not only may but we must study these things critically, just as we would similar details in any other ancient document, *to see if the Bible statements are supported or contradicted by known facts from other sources.* . . . Oh, what freedom came into my own soul twelve years ago when God drove me through doubt to the more thorough study that left me with this settled conviction that 'the Word they still shall let remain!' . . . It is my growing conviction that it is possible to arrive at a *reasonable faith* in the *substantial truthfulness* of the human framework of the Bible." (Italics ours.) *Theologische Quartalschrift*, April, 1939, pp. 147 f., passes this judgment on the above — and we must agree with it —: "Every Christian must object most vigorously to these statements: 'How can we know,' etc.? 'To see if the Bible statements,' etc. The treacherous deception of this position. . . . The inerrancy of the Bible concerning its 'human framework' does not rest on any assurance given to our faith by God; it rests on critical investigation by man! Although the article . . . maintains that the Bible has victoriously come out of every critical investigation, this does not alter the case: theoretically the possibility of error is granted. . . . If these people have no Scripture ground on which to stand, then their assumption of inerrancy is merely a *human opinion* and not an article of faith." In addition, we would point out that this "*reasonable faith*" is not *faith* at all. It cannot be a lasting conviction. Tomorrow's scientific investigation may shatter it. And must the Christian go without "*faith*" so long as science has not given him assurance in a given case? Luther says, on Gen. 11:27, 28: "Bei Abraham verlieren sich sechzig Jahr." (I:721.) The chronologists have not yet found them. There seems to be something wrong with Moses' chronology on this point. How long must I wait till I can say: This part of the Bible is absolutely true? Am I left meanwhile to struggle with the fearful thought that a part of the inspired Bible is unreliable?

paramour takes pleasure in questioning and ridiculing these glorious promises. She tells us: These things are unreasonable; they are impossible. Speaking through the mouth of Dr. Shailer Mathews, she says: "Prayer is the asking of favors from a definite personality, who, it is hoped, can be induced to do favors to the petitioner. . . . But such an attitude is quite impossible for one who in any way is acquainted with the forces of the universe and the laws which describe their operation. The belief in cosmic reason and will does not yield itself to pleas for forgiveness. . . . If prayer cannot effect changes in actual situations, what is the use of prayer?" (*New Faiths for Old*. See *Conc. Theol. Month.*, VIII:940.) Kirsopp Lake, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* of 1924, assures us: "Probably few educated men believe in the efficiency of prayer. The laws of life—which is the will of God—are not changed in their working by prayer, sacrifices, or fasting." Does God give rain as a result of prayer? In 1930, the year of the drought, H. E. Fosdick told the readers of the *Christian Century*: "Of course prayer does not affect the weather. . . . We can expect results in a law-abiding universe only when we fulfil appropriate conditions for getting them. . . . The crude, obsolete supernaturalism which prays for rain is a standing reproach to our religion and will be taken by many an intelligent mind as an excuse for saying, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be an atheist.'" <sup>6)</sup> And then, even if God could control the forces of the universe and of humanity, how could he answer *all* prayer, seeing that one Christian or one group of Christians is asking for the very opposite of what another individual or group is praying for? The spokesmen for carnal reasons make much of this. In the tract *Shall We Stop Praying in War-time?* written during the first World War, Paul Lindemann writes: "Again the scoffers say: 'Why, both sides cannot win. The Germans are praying for the success of their arms, and so are we praying for the success of our arms. If there were a God ready to hear and answer,

6) Yesterday (Sept. 11) we read in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*: "In a paper read yesterday to the Conference of Science, Religion, and Philosophy, Albert Einstein said: 'It seems to me that the path to genuine religiosity does not lie through the fear of life and the fear of death and blind faith but through striving after rational knowledge. . . . In their struggle for the ethical good, teachers of religion must have the stature to give up the doctrine of a personal God, that is, give up that source of fear and hope which in the past placed such vast power in the hands of priests. . . . The more a man is imbued with the ordered regularity of all events, the firmer becomes his conviction that there is no room left by the side of this ordered regularity for the causes of a different nature. For him neither the rule of human nor the rule of divine will exists as an independent cause of natural events.'" Is there any difference between the Fosdick-Mathews-Lake faith in a God who has no control over the cosmic law and the creed of Einstein, which because of this same "ordered regularity of all events" calls for the abdication of a personal God?

would it not put Him in a sore dilemma as to which petition He should grant? . . . Stop the nonsensical practice. Prayer is more than useless. If there is a God, He will do as He sees fit, regardless of the prayers of man." Again, how can you keep on trusting in the promise of God to hear all prayer when you have found many of your prayers unanswered? Experience and reason prove the futility and folly of prayer.

Prayer is "a mild form of insanity." Kant, the great philosopher, said that. Satan's paramour goes into paroxysms of laughter when she sees the Christian bow his head and pray: "give us this day our daily bread." Luther should have had more sense than to write this: "Each single Christian accomplishes such great things that he can rule the whole world in divine matters, help all men and perform the greatest works that ever were done on earth. . . . God sustains the world for the Christian's sake. If there were no Christians on earth, no city or nation would have peace; yea, in one day Satan would destroy everything on earth. That grain still is growing on the farms and people enjoy health, have their living, peace and protection, they owe to the Christians. We are indeed poor beggars, says St. Paul, 2 Cor. 6:10, 'yet making many rich.' . . . What the world has and can do it has as a loan from those beggars. . . . All that is given the world by God He gives because of these beggars, so that all gifts are declared to be works and miracles of the Christians. . . . I shall, says Christ, make of you who believe in Me such lords that you shall bring about and achieve whatever you desire, and shall with Me rule both spiritually over the souls for their salvation and also through your prayer obtain and preserve all that is on earth, that men must receive these things at your hands and, though they know it not, live on you." (VIII:350 f.) When Luther declares: "Just as the Christian Church is preserved through God's Word and the ministry, so also it is preserved through the prayer of every Christian. We Christians are mighty warriors; first, we who preach, and then you who pray. Diese zwei Stuecke tun dem Teufel das Herzeleid an, wo man also fleissig predigt und ernstlich betet" (XIII:2000 f.), and declares this: "Though Turk, Pope, Emperor, and all the gates of hell should oppose us, they could not accomplish anything. . . . Since we can kill the devil with prayer, why should we not be able to drive off Turk and Pope?" (II:1645), yes, and this: "Durch sein Koenigreich ist der Christenmensch aller Dinge maechtig; durch sein Priestertum ist er Gottes maechtig. Denn Gott tut, was er bittet und will, wie da steht geschrieben im Psalter, Ps. 145:19" (XIX:998), Kant and Einstein and Fosdick cry out: Luther, thou art beside thyself; thy talk indicateth a mild form of insanity.

These are the spoutings of Liberalism, of unbelief,—and the

ratiocinations of our own flesh. When our carnal mind thinks of divine things, it produces Kantian thoughts. The Christian will never say that prayer is useless, that God is subject to the cosmic laws; but in practice we often agree with Kant's and Fosdick's thesis, neglect prayer, and think: It is useless; events must take their natural course. When insurmountable difficulties confront us, we are not always ready to take God at His word and ask Him to do the impossible. Our reason keeps down our fervor. Our past experience of prayers "unanswered" discourages us to continue in prayer,—but it is our blind reason that speaks of unanswered prayers. And sometimes our reason speaks the truth. It tells us that we have no right to ask favors of God in view of our sinfulness and ingratitude. And then it adds the lie: You have no right to pray at all.

How shall we overcome these temptations of Satan to cast away prayer because of its unreasonableness? It will help somewhat if we remind him that his arguments are here, too, as all along the line, unreasonable. There would be some sense in decrying prayer only if there were no personal God. But as long as reason admits the existence of God,—and it does that,—it must admit that God can hear prayer and perform miracles. God means Omnipotence and Omniscience. A god who is bound by the rule that  $2 \times 2 = 4$  is not God. "Do not tell Jesus that common arithmetic and the laws of supply and demand will not permit Him to feed five thousand men with five loaves." (See p. 758 above.) God's arithmetic and economics is Higher Arithmetic and Higher Economics.<sup>7)</sup> To say that God cannot hear prayer, is not even sound reason.

But that is not enough. We need, in addition, to realize the wickedness our rationalizing flesh is perpetrating. Harboring the thought that God cannot hear every prayer is setting reason above revelation and making our puny intelligence the measure of God's wisdom and might. That is a form of idolatry. And when our flesh thinks it does not need God's almighty help in every work we undertake, even the least, and takes up the chant: "I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul," we are again committing

7) See also Walther, *Gnadenjahr*, p. 169 f.: "To many people it seems a vain thought to expect their prayer to be granted. From eternity, they say, that which is to happen has been determined. Who, then, can be so presumptuous as to imagine that his prayer will bring about a change in the divine government of the world? Who can hope that his prayer will influence the immutable God and induce Him to change His will? But these people do not consider that God can grant all our petitions without setting aside His eternal counsels; for, since God is omniscient and all-wise, He has known from eternity, not only that and how we are going to pray, but from eternity He has arranged all things in such a manner, and given them such a place in His plans for the government of the world, that just those events must come to pass which we ask for."

self-deification. Moreover, all this gives the lie to Christ's sweet promises.

And consider the harm of it. We are depriving ourselves of great and wonderful blessings through listening to Satan's paramour and failing to ask for these blessings. Worst of all, our faith is in mortal danger. Faith lives on God's Word, and when Satan aims to put God's Word and promise out of our mind, he is aiming a mortal stroke at the life of faith. And faith cannot live unless it is exercised. Doubt, if unchecked, will ultimately destroy faith. "The old evil Foe means deadly woe."

Nor is that enough. The strategy of the Christian warfare consists in doing the very thing Satan would dissuade us from doing. The more he ridicules God's promise, the more stubbornly we shall cling to it. The more he deals in common mathematics and common economics, the more we make of the Higher Mathematics and Economics at the disposal of God — and of the believing petitioner. Do not parley with Satan, but "take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked," Eph. 6:16.

A second fiery dart: Satan would have us base our assurance of salvation, of the grace of God, of the forgiveness of sins, on our feelings, sensations, and experience, and not on the bare promise of God's Word. That strikes at the very vitals of faith. For faith lives on the Word.

The opinion is widely spread that we cannot be sure of God's grace unless we feel "grace" in our hearts. When a man admits that he feels nothing but the wrath of God and cannot evoke joyful sensations, he is told that he is, at least for the time being, in the state of wrath. Great churches, great preachers, take this view of the matter, and Satan would have every Christian take this view. All of us are inclined to do it. Our carnal heart would rather believe in what it sees and feels than in what God's Word tells us.

That is because the theology of our flesh is the theology of rationalism. It is a most reasonable assumption that, if your sins are forgiven and heaven is opened to you, nothing but heavenly joy can be in your heart. And reason takes nothing on trust. It must see and feel before it can be sure of a thing. — We are here dealing with a subtle form of rationalism. In a sermon on 1 Cor. 15:1 ff. Luther declares: "If you are not ready to believe that the Word is worth more than all you see and feel, then *reason has blinded faith*. So the resurrection of the dead is something that must be believed. I do not feel the resurrection of Christ, but the Word affirms it. I feel sin, but the Word says that it is forgiven to those who believe. I see that Christians die like other men, but the Word tells me that they shall rise again. So we must not be



guided by our own feelings but by the Word." (Quoted in A. Koeberle, *The Quest for Holiness*, p. 79.) When a man refuses to believe any Christian truth unless he sees and feels it, and when the Christian hesitates to trust the Word of absolution in the Gospel and the Sacraments because his senses do not confirm it, reason is dominating the thoughts of both of them. It is certainly a form of rationalism when a believer makes his own experience and his own judgment based thereon the basis of his trust. And it is the pride of reason, inherent in our flesh, that tempts us to do so.

We shall not elaborate this last point—the pride of reason—but use all our time to point out the deadly harm resulting from the reliance on feeling. Only the Word of God can sustain faith and produce divine assurance. Our feelings, our heavenly sensations, cannot serve as the foundation of faith. For they are variable. At times they completely vanish, and the man who makes them his trust must despair. "My friends, do you think you can control your feelings? I am sure, if I could control my feelings, I never would have any bad feelings; I would always have good feelings. But bear in mind: Satan may change our feelings fifty times a day, but he cannot change the Word of God; and what we want is to build our hopes of heaven upon the Word of God. When a poor sinner is coming up out of the pit and just ready to get his feet upon the Rock of Ages, the devil sticks out a plank of feelings and says, 'Get on that'; and when he puts his feet on that, down he goes again. Take one of these texts: 'He that *heareth My Word* and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life and *shall not* come into condemnation but is *passed* from death unto life.' That rock is higher than my feelings. And what we need is to get our feet upon the rock, and the Lord will put a new song in our mouths." (D. L. Moody, quoted in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1936, p. 186.)<sup>8)</sup> Again, our feelings are often deceptive. Men have committed great crimes as a consequence of taking their feelings, *their* sense of right, for their guide. And not every feeling of devotion, not every religious emotion, not every song in the heart,

8) The same thoughts are expressed in *The Riches of His Grace*, pp. 143 ff., by John Schmidt (Lutheran pastor in Blacksburg, Va.): "Nor am I more successful when I seek to build upon my feelings. As the plantation Negroes sang, 'Sometimes I'm up; sometimes I'm down.' Our feelings are too inconstant, too variable, to give me the assurance I seek. . . . So long as we seek security in ourselves, we shall fail. No permanent assurance and consequently no lasting peace of heart can be found until we can find a certain footing beyond ourselves. . . . Our certainty lies here: 'Not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins,' 1 John 4:10. The foundation upon which the Christian life rests is not my love but His, not my faith but His faithfulness, not my goodness but His mercy. These things do not change. My love and devotion may be cooled by some wind of temptation," etc.



is a product of the Holy Spirit. The Evil Spirit can produce a counterfeit.<sup>9)</sup> And what will happen in the hour when you find nothing in your heart but fear and doubt and despair? Such dark hours come to all Christians. "I said in my haste: I am cut off from before Thine eyes," Ps. 31:22. "All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me. . . . Why hast Thou forgotten me?" Ps. 42:7, 9. "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me," Ps. 116:3. He is undone who takes his feelings for his guide. It is impossible that faith should endure if it is based on feeling, and so Satan would persuade us to plant ourselves upon this foundation. "He is indeed the Wicked One; that is, he is crafty, and fiery are his darts; he is most subtle in drawing man away from that which is not seen in order to hold him to that which is seen. He would have him be guided by what he feels, not by that which he does not feel. But he feels that he is forsaken [by God]; he does not feel that he is elected. If, then, he goes by his feeling, it is impossible that he can maintain himself." (Luther, IV:1268.)

There is only one foundation of our faith: God's Word and promise, and so Satan aims to keep us away from the Word. Let those who think that it does not accord with reason to build their assurance on the Word, unseen and unfelt, and would rather rely on their senses and sensations, realize that their faith is in mortal peril. Let them take Luther's—and Christ's—warning to heart: "God will not permit us to rely on anything or to cling with our hearts to anything that is not Christ revealed in His Word, *no matter how holy and full of the Spirit it may seem. Faith has no other ground on which to take its stand.* . . . We should remember that we must seek Christ in His Father's house and business: we must simply cling to the Word of the Gospel alone, which shows us Christ aright and teaches us to know Him. . . . You must say with Christ: What does it mean that you are running hither and thither, that you torment yourselves with anxious and sad thoughts, imagining that God will not keep you in His grace and that there is no longer any Christ for you? Why do you refuse to be satisfied unless you find Him in yourselves and have the feeling of being holy and without sin? You will never succeed; all your toil will be labor lost. . . .

9) "Forsaking the *terra firma* of objective certainties, where God has revealed the truth in definite terms, where the truth of God's own Word guarantees absolute certainty, this method of arriving at the truth (basing on the believer's experience and judgment, on the judgment of a fallible human being) sets the soul adrift on the sea of subjective uncertainty and unreliability. . . . The sinner is looking for the saving truth and is told to listen to the song in his heart. How shall he know whether it is the sweet voice of Jesus or the deceptive word of Satan? And what shall he do in the day of distress when he finds nothing in his heart but doubt and despair?" (CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY, X:579.)

You are being guided by your feeling and think you can apprehend Him with your thoughts. You must come to the place where there is neither your own nor any man's business, but God's business and government, namely, to His Word." (XI:453 f.)<sup>10)</sup>

We repeat it. Faith lives on the Word, and Satan is aiming to destroy our faith by diverting us from the Word to something in ourselves. Hear Luther once more: "Another quality of faith is that it waives previous knowledge and assurance of its worthiness to receive the grace of God and to be heard by Him. That is what doubters do who reach out after God and try Him. They are groping after God similarly to a blind man groping along a wall; they first of all want to feel and be certified that He cannot escape them. The Epistle to the Hebrews, in chap. 11, says: 'Faith is a sure confidence in things hoped for, not judging things by what they appear to be.' That means, faith clings to things that it does not see, feel, or apprehend by means of the senses. It is rather a trusting reliance on God, on whom it is willing to risk and stake everything, not doubting that it will come out winner. The outcome certifies the correctness of such trust and the feeling and sensation will come to him unsought and undesired in and through this same believing." (XI:1577.)<sup>11)</sup> Oh, what fools Satan and his paramour make of us—getting us to make the result of our assurance the basis of our assurance!

"Diese Erfahrungen oder die besonderen Vorgaenge und Gefuehle in der Seele . . . sind gar herrliche Gaben Gottes; aber wer darauf die Vergebung baut, hat auf Sand gebaut." (Walther, *Die luth. Lehre von der Rechtf.*, p. 85 f.) It is a foundation of sand for the reasons mentioned. But also for this additional reason: Trusting in your feelings is trusting in something within yourself, something of your own. These Spirit-wrought feelings are blessed gifts, gifts indeed, but they come under the category of *gratia infusa*, and building salvation on the *gratia infusa* is making the certainty and

10) Read the entire passage! You will find it, in translation, in Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, p. 205. And be sure to study the entire section in Walther's book treating Thesis IX: "The Word of God is not rightly divided when sinners who have been struck down and terrified by the Law are directed not to the Word and the Sacraments but to their own prayers and wrestlings with God in order that they may win their way into a state of grace; in other words, when they are told to keep on praying and struggling until they feel that God has received them into grace," pages 127—207.

11) "The feeling and sensation will come." God gives His children seasons of refreshment, when they taste and feel His goodness, sweet peace filling their hearts and the fire of love and zeal bursting forth in mighty flames. We thank God for these experiences. But do not turn these blessings into a curse by making them the ground of your faith.

hope of salvation dependent on something in which you have a part. It is virtually the deadly poison of salvation through the Law; it leads men to trust in their acquirements and achievements. Do you not see Satan's wiles and guile? The *opinio legis* inheres in us by nature. Reason can see nothing but salvation through works. And it flatters our pride to feel that we have contributed something to our own salvation. And if Satan can get us to take this position and *retain* it, we are undone. Faith which trusts in any degree in a human achievement, and let it be a *Spirit-given* acquirement, is not the Christian faith. Hear Dr. Pieper on this point: "It is necessary to call attention to the fact that also those Christians who theoretically teach correctly on the means of grace and, as a rule, also believe correctly nevertheless in their *practice as to themselves* only too often forget the means of grace. This happens whenever they attempt to base the certainty of grace, or the remission of sins, on the feeling of grace, or the *gratia infusa*, instead of basing it on God's promise in the objective means of grace. We are all born enthusiasts. . . . We look into our *own* heart and seek to measure God's disposition to us by our own thoughts and moods. . . . Christianity is a most singular religion, not natural, native, indigenous to us. . . . Innate in us is the *opinio legis*, the religion of the Law. If we observe virtue in us, we regard God as gracious. If we see sin in us and our conscience condemns us because of it, we imagine that God is minded to reject us. . . . Then only do we live our spiritual life on the right basis and in agreement with the singularity of the *Christian* religion, if we, to speak with Luther, 'flee out of ourselves,' and base our faith in the grace of God on the means of grace lying outside of us." (*Op. cit.*, III:154 f. W. Albrecht's translation, III:85 f.) Hear Bishop W. Alexander: "The origin of emotionalism is the desire of having the feelings touched, partly from sheer love of excitement, partly from an idea that, *if and when* we have worked up certain emotions to a fixed point, we are saved and safe. This reliance upon feelings is in the last analysis reliance upon self. *It is a form of salvation by works*; for feelings are inward actions. . . ." (*The Epistles of St. John*, p. 194, on 1 John 3:16-18.) And Dr. Walther closes his discussion of Thesis IX with the words: "In the last analysis it would mean that I make myself my savior. (*Op. cit.*, p. 207.) Back of the reliance on feeling is the *opinio legis*. There is deadly peril in it.

As we value our soul's salvation, we must be guided by John 20:29: "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed," and 1 John 3:20: "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart." Against these fiery darts "You are in grace, for you feel grace; you are under wrath, for you feel God's wrath" we need to take up the shield of faith and, though the arguments

of Satan sound plausible and flatter our flesh, stubbornly<sup>12)</sup> cling to the bare Word and declare: "I cling to what my Savior taught And trust it, whether felt or not."

Again, Satan assaults our faith by creating doubts in our hearts as to the truth and reliability of God's gracious promise to keep us in faith, and this dart, too, is dipped in the lethal poison of rational considerations and logical objections. He reminds us of the many temporary believers and asks us: Are you any better than these other Christians who did not persevere? And when we admit that we are not, he asks: What guaranty have you that God will preserve *you*? That promise: "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," Phil. 1:6, cannot be taken at its face value; otherwise those other believers would not have fallen away. Satan further asks us: Have you never read Phil. 2:12? There is something said there about "fear and trembling"; there is something wrong with your "assurance." You are "persuaded that neither death nor life nor any other creature shall be able to separate" you from God? (Rom. 8:38). Paul could not have meant real assurance, full certainty; just read 1 Cor. 9:27: "lest that by any means I myself should be a castaway." Paul knew that he might fall away. How, then, can a man, Satan triumphantly concludes, be sure of his final salvation when he knows, absolutely, that the danger of apostasy is a real one? That would be contrary to all laws of human psychology. Men are not so constituted that they can know that they may fall away and can know that they will not fall away.

There is force in these argumentations of Satan. They trouble the Christians, raise doubts in their hearts, doubts which are aflame with hellish torment. And if these arguments are not answered, we shall cast away those glorious promises. How, then, shall we answer them? We cannot answer them by means of logic. But we have an answer and that is: We spit upon logic. When Satan's paramour told us that the teachings of the Bible are against reason and logic, we said: "I spit on the philosophy that cannot see beyond 'two plus two equals four.'" There are ways to truth other than the way of logic." (See p. 759 above.) And when she now tells us that according to the laws of psychology fear, real fear, and trust, real trust, cannot be in the same heart, that consequently either those passages of Scripture which warn against defection or those passages (preferably those) which guaranty

12) Luther: "Wenn der Mensch nun handelt nach seinem Fuehlen, so ist es unmoeglich, dass er erhalten werde. Darum handle er nach dem Glauben, das heisst, ohne auf sein Fuehlen zu achten, und werde gegen diese Laesterungen, welche der Satan in seinem Herzen erregt, wie ein unbeweglicher Klotz." (IV:1268.)

against defection must be eliminated or modified, we say: We spit upon psychology. There is a Higher Psychology guiding the Christian. According to Christian psychology we take both series of passages at their full value. God's warnings and God's promises are both true, and He has created in His Christians the wonderful faculty to take both to heart. The Christian has learned the wonderful art of distinguishing between the Law and the Gospel. And through the power of the Holy Spirit he applies the warnings when he finds himself beset by carnal security, and the promises when he needs comfort. We cannot solve the difficulty intellectually, but God solves it for us miraculously. In spite of the protest of Satan that it cannot be done we fear and we trust. We trust God's promise to keep us though reason insists that He has not always kept His promise.<sup>13)</sup>

13) What we are trying to say is this: "So, then, the Christian is divided into two times. In that he is flesh, he is under the Law; in that he is Spirit, he is under grace. . . . Wherefore, if thou behold nothing but the flesh, thou shalt abide always under the time of the Law. But these days must be shortened, or else no flesh should be saved. The Law must have his time appointed; it must have his end. The time of the Law, therefore, is not perpetual, but hath his end in Jesus Christ. . . . Thus doth Paul very well distinguish the time of the Law and grace. Let us also learn rightly to distinguish the time of them both, not in words but in the inward affections, *which is a very hard matter*. For albeit these two things are separate far asunder; yet are they most nearly joined together in one heart. Nothing is joined more nearly together than fear and trust, than the Law and the Gospel, than sin and grace; for they are so united together, that the one is swallowed up of the other. Wherefore there is no mathematical conjunction" (relation known to logical thinking) "like unto this." (Luther, IX:452 f.) And this: "Damit der Christ diese rechte Mittelstrasse innehaelt, muss er zwischen der 'Zeit des Gesetzes' und der 'Zeit der Gnade' unterscheiden koennen. 'Zeit des Gesetzes' ist, wenn in meinem Gewissen oder in meinem Fleische die Sunde aufwacht. 'Zeit der Gnade' dagegen ist, wenn Herz und Gewissen befriedet und erfreut sind durch das goettliche Verheissungswort. Zwischen diesen beiden 'Zeiten,' die, moegen sie auch begrifflich aufs klarste unterschieden sein, doch in der Wirklichkeit des psychischen Lebens aufs innigste verbunden sind, muss der Christ allmaehlich unterscheiden lernen; denn in der 'Zeit des Gesetzes' muss er sich an die Gnade halten, um nicht der Verzweiflung preisgegeben zu sein; in der 'Zeit der Gnade' muss er sich am Gesetze pruefen, um nicht vermessen zu werden." (E. Schott, *Fleisch und Geist nach Luthers Lehre*, p. 79.) Also this: "We have here confronting a difficulty which cannot be dealt with by logical deduction but only realistically. Logical considerations cannot serve because we here have before us a relation which—in the words of Luther—has no counterpart in all mathematics. We must remember that not only the Law but also the Gospel deals with the Christian. And our difficulty will be solved by distinguishing between the Law and the Gospel. The Christian realizes the danger of defection . . . and is filled with fear. But according to God's will and command *this* state of mind must cease as soon as the warnings against defection have accomplished their purpose, caused the Christian to despair of his own powers and to completely humble himself before God. And such a one must now take up the Gospel. That *promises* him that God will, *solely through grace*, keep him in faith. He is to believe this promise and *he does believe it*.

Let us ever be on our guard! Satan is enticing us to leave our safe retreat, the Word of God, and argue out the matter with him on rational grounds. That would be our undoing. Listen to Luther: "I have learned through sad experience that, when Satan catches me away from Scripture, when I begin to indulge my own thoughts and let them teach me heavenly things, he will get me into a place that I no longer know where God is and where I am. God would have us learn and retain the truth in this way, that we disregard reason and all own thoughts and feeling and cling to the Word alone." (Sermon on John 16:17.) Mixing reason with Scripture, interpreting the Gospel by the Law, — to Scripture-logic that is a form of sophistry, — is "mixing heaven and hell, life and death"; "it is making hell out of heaven and heaven out of hell" (Luther, XVIII:1787; XXII:497).

And now for the fiercest, the deadliest and the most insidious assault of Satan: he mobilizes all the forces of carnal reason to keep us away from the Gospel, to keep us from accepting the free forgiveness of our sins. It is his fiercest assault, for he hates nothing so much as the article of justification by grace, through faith. The deadliest, for this is the very life of faith; that by which a man becomes God's child and the Christian remains God's child is trust in the gracious, the free Gospel-promise. And the most insidious, for he operates with the truth; he uses and misapplies the truth of

... This practical solution of the logical difficulty will not satisfy the dialectician. Men will still imagine that, if the possibility of defection is granted, there can be no assurance of salvation; and *vice versa*, if a man is certain of his perseverance, he will not seriously consider the possibility that he may fall away. But such manipulations are contrary to Scripture and contrary to Christian experience. . . . The blessed truth is that according to God's will the Gospel remains the Christian's *retreat*, to which he ever returns as to his spiritual *home*. And dwelling in the Gospel, he is confident of his preservation." (Pieper, *Lehre u. Wehre*, 27, p. 559 f.) The Christian's logic is able to say to Satan when he brings up the matter of the temporary believers: That is a foreign matter, and I shall simply not listen. *Apology of the Formula of Concord*: "They object that we weaken the general promises in that the *Book of Concord* declares that some of the converted are lost, while confessing that the salvation of the believers is assured. *This is bringing in a foreign matter.*" (Quoted in *Proceedings, Western Dist.*, 1879, p. 103.) In these same *Proceedings* Dr. Walther says, p. 65 f.: "Now, it is said, against this doctrine of the certainty of election the fact that there are such as believe for a time is a veritable iron wall. . . . That objection is nothing but a mere rationalistic inference [*ein blosser Vernunftschluss*], which shall not overthrow these precious promises. True, we cannot solve the seeming contradiction concerning temporary believers; for we are wretched [*arm-selige*] creatures. But this should not move us to overthrow the clear Word of God and rob us and Christendom of such an exceedingly comforting doctrine. . . . The apostle is not at all concerned about temporary believers. Yes, that is the correct treatment of temporary believers: Do not trouble yourself about them; only in so far as you take them for a warning example that you may not become a temporary believer." (Translation in *Proceedings, Texas Dist.*, 1936, p. 19 f.)



the Law to cast doubt upon the truth of the Gospel. His argument is: Since the Law is God's eternal truth and the Law declares that the sinner is damned, a Gospel which offers free salvation to the sinner cannot be true. And at once our reason sides with Satan.

Human reason cannot accept the truth that God is both holy and gracious, that He hates the sinner and loves the sinner. Reason finds such a contradictory statement intolerable.<sup>14</sup> It cannot accept it, mainly because it *will* not accept it. Logic is not so much in the way as the aversion of the flesh to the concept of a gracious God, of salvation by grace alone. Carnal reason knows of no other way of salvation than by way of the Law. Proud reason will hear of no other way. "Human reason naturally admires these [works] . . . and dreams accordingly that these works merit remission of sins and justify. This opinion of the Law (*opinio legis*) inheres by nature in men's minds. . . . Human wisdom gazes at the Law and seeks in it justification" (*Apology*, pp. 197. 183.)<sup>15</sup> And the flesh within the believer harbors the same sentiments, the same illusion. We will not utter these thoughts after the manner of gross rationalism (see June number, p. 422 ff.), but the creed of the rationalist Paulus and the Modernist Fosdick and the pagan Fronto expresses the faith of our carnal reason, our proud flesh. The consequence is that the satanic logic: The Law condemns every transgression; thou hast transgressed the Law: therefore thou art damned, is invincible — so long as we are fools enough to fight it out with Satan on the lines of logic, so long as we give reason a voice in divine matters.

Luther was not fool enough to do it. He employed, and we need to employ, a Higher Logic. "Satan is such an accomplished juggler that he can easily abolish the difference and make the Law force itself into the place of the Gospel and *vice versa*. We often

14) "Luther says of the Law and the Gospel that 'they are disparate in the highest degree and are more than contradictories.' Luther is entirely correct. Law and Gospel are absolute opposites. Their relation is that of yes and no. . . . According to His justice God sentences sinners to hell; according to His grace He opens heaven to the same sinner in the same condition. How both attributes, or 'Bestimmtheiten,' form a 'higher unit' in the one indivisible God is beyond our intellectual cognition." (Pieper, *op. cit.*, pp. 268, 295.)

15) Luther: "As touching the words, the distinction [between Law and Gospel] is easy, but in time of temptation thou shalt find the Gospel but as a stranger and rare guest in thy conscience; but the Law, contrariwise, thou shalt find a familiar and a continual dweller within thee, for reason hath the knowledge of the Law naturally." (IX:161.) H. Diem: "Darum gehoeren Gesetz und alter Mensch zusammen; das heisst, das Gesetz ist der Dauergast in unserm Gewissen und ist mit unserer Vernunft verschworen. Luther, Weimarer Ausg., 40, I, 44 und 209." (*Luthers Lehre von den zwei Reichen*, p. 163.) Luther: "This evil is so deeply rooted in us that human reason is unable to rid itself of the phantasm of active, its own, righteousness." (IX:18.)



meet with people in their last agony who with a stricken conscience seize a few sayings which they suppose to be Gospel, while in reality they are Law, and thus forfeit the consolation of the Gospel, for instance, the statements in Matt. 19:17 and 7:21. . . . Theoretically this distinction is easily made, but in the hour of death and in perils we find that we are but poor dialecticians and cannot stand our ground when the question is raised what we have done and what we ought to have done, when the Law accuses us: This the Lord has commanded you to do, but you did the very opposite; therefore thou wilt be damned according to the sentence of the Lawgiver (Deut. 27:26). But a *good dialectician* distinguishes between the Law and the Gospel; he admits that he has not fulfilled the Law, but declares: From this premise the conclusion does not follow that I must despair and be damned. For the Gospel bids me to believe in Christ and trust in His works and righteousness." (IV:2077 f.) "Be a good dialectician and tell the Law: Stay where you belong; you are in charge of the flesh; but do not dare to touch my conscience." (IX:26.) The logic of faith operates with Rom. 10:4; 2 Cor. 3:11; Gal. 3:23 f. The Gospel is the "Higher Word," and the conclusions of the "lower word" no longer count. "Therefore, when the Law accuses me that I have not done this or that, that I am unrighteous and written down a sinner in God's debt-book, I must confess that all of it is true. But the conclusion 'Therefore you are damned' I must not admit but in strong faith struggle against it and say: According to the Law, which imputes my guilt to me, I am indeed a poor, lost sinner, but I appeal from the Law to the Gospel; for God has given another word over and above the Law, called the Gospel. . . . The Law has come to an end. For as the lesser work it should and must give place to the Gospel. Both are God's Word; but one is lower, the other is higher; one is weaker, the other stronger; one is lesser, the other greater. When, now, they wrestle with each other, I follow the Gospel and say, Good-by, Law!" (IX:806 ff.) That is the logic of faith. And unless we employ it, we are undone.

But it is so hard to employ it. Reason, our own reason, our flesh, rises in all its might against this strange logic.<sup>16)</sup> Our self-

16) Luther: "We have against us even the one half of ourselves, that is to say, reason and all the powers thereof." (IX:95.) "He that thinks it is a simple matter might learn something from what has happened to me. On several occasions Satan caught me when I was not thinking of this chief thing and troubled me with Scripture-passages so that heaven and earth became too narrow for me. There all man's work and laws were right, and there was nothing wrong with the Papacy. . . . Therefore, dear brother, be not puffed up; be not too sure and secure, thinking you know Christ well. You are hearing what I am confessing, what Satan achieved against me, who surely should be a Doctor in this art." (V:1171. See also XXII:766, etc.)

righteous reason spits upon these words of Luther: "The true knowledge of Christ, or faith, disputeth not whether thou hast done good works to righteousness or evil works to condemnation, but simply concludeth after this sort: If thou hast done good works, thou art not therefore justified; or if thou hast done evil works, thou art not therefore condemned." (IX:619.) Our sanctimonious flesh declares that Luther blasphemed when he wrote: "It is wonderful. And the world cannot conceive of it that Christians should be instructed not to know the Law and so to live before God as though there were absolutely no Law." (IX:20.) It is hard, in the hour of temptation and affliction, to employ the logic of faith. We must fight to the death to do it.

Indeed, it is a life-and-death struggle. Reason must die,<sup>17)</sup> or faith dies. If a man is not willing to crucify his reason, blind it, kill it, he cannot retain the Gospel of the free forgiveness of sin; his faith will die.

*Ratio inimica fidei!* Luther is not speaking of gross rationalism, which destroys every single article of faith. He is speaking of the rationalistic poison Satan is ever injecting into the heart of the Christian. The entire passage reads: "Wherefore in this case away with reason, which is an enemy to faith, which also in temptations of sin and death leaneth not to the righteousness of faith (for thereof it is entirely ignorant) but to her own righteousness, or, at the least, to the righteousness of the Law. Now, as soon as the Law and reason join together, faith loseth her virginity, for nothing fighteth more strongly against faith than the Law and reason. And these two enemies cannot be conquered but with great labor and difficulty; which we must conquer notwithstanding if we will be saved." (IX:157.) "*Nos occidimus rationem!*"

Let us pray. "Lord, our God, most graciously didst Thou give us Thy holy, unerring Word to be a lamp unto our feet and a light upon our path. Preserve us from making our blind reason or the opinion of the wicked world our guide. Grant us grace that by the aid of Thy Holy Spirit we may follow Thy Word alone, departing from it neither to the right nor to the left, until, having escaped all the dangers that threaten our souls, we shall have arrived at the end of our pilgrimage and have come into blissful communion with Thee in heaven. Grant our prayer for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son, our Lord and Savior. Amen." (Walther, *Church-membership*, p. 90.)

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17) Luther: "*Si ratio sol michi lere, quare non abiicimus evangelium et librum scripturae? Nos praedicamus aliquid hoher quam ratio et occidimus rationem.*" (Weimar ed., 47, p. 844.) H. Diem adds the remark: "Die Vernunft muss sterben, wenn anders die Predigt des in Christus vom Himmel auf die Erde gekommenen Gottes gelten soll. Aber sie stirbt nicht durch Selbstmord, sondern wird getoetet." (L. c.)

## Lectures on Galatians

### THIRD LECTURE

Gal. 3:13

#### I

Christ became a curse for us.

Why do you not jump up quivering from this electric shock?

Christ, the Only-begotten of the Father, in the bosom of the Father from eternity, in the glory of the Father—this majestic Christ became a curse for us.

A startling statement! What is it all about?

God said, If a man keep my commandments, "he shall live in them," Lev. 18:5.

Many centuries later the Savior still said the same, Keep the commandments, "and thou shalt live," Luke 10:25-37; Matt. 19:16-22.

Sounds good; but what if I break the Law?

Cursed is every one who continueth not in all good things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them, says God, Deut. 27:26; 28:15; Josh. 8:32-35.

"Cursed" is the lawbreaker say Peter and Paul, 2 Pet. 2:14; Eph. 2:2, 3.

"Cursed" is the lawbreaker, the Savior Himself will say on the terrible Judgment Day, Matt. 25:41.

Doesn't that make the cold shivers run up and down your spine? God's curse!

Who keeps the Law?

There was a rich young ruler, so likable that "Jesus, looking upon him, loved him." This fine fellow fooled himself and said he had kept the Law from his youth. The Savior, however, proved he had not yet even begun to keep it, was in fact breaking it right there and then. How? Loving his money more than his neighbor, loving his gold more than his God; in fact, making gold his god. Money is the acid test, Mark 10:17-30; Luke 18:18-30.

Nicodemus was a grave and reverend gentleman, a fine Pharisee, an honorable ruler of the Jews, a venerable teacher in Israel. And yet the very first thing the Savior said was, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven," John 3:1-21.

Saul of Tarsus boasted, "Touching the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless," Phil. 3:6. Later he learned his lesson and declared "There is no distinction; for all sinned and fall short of the glory of God," Rom. 1:3-23.

We all have broken the Law, and so we all are under the curse of the Law. If we cannot save ourselves by the works of the Law, how can we escape the curse of the Law?

Christ went to the slave market and bought us out of the curse. What price? He became a curse for us. 1 Pet. 1:18; 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21.

How?

He was hanged on the tree; and he that is hanged is accursed of God, Deut. 21:23. He knew no sin, and so He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and the curse of God fell on the Lamb of God that bore the sins of the world. He was stricken, smitten of God. And He felt to the full the force of the curse. It forced from Him the heart-breaking wail, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

The Son of God — forsaken by God!

The Son of God — a curse of God!

Reason reels. But in that moment He suffered the torments of the damned. He endured the curse, and that is the fine He paid to buy us free from the curse.

He gave Himself an offering and a sacrifice to God and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, the Righteous instead of the unrighteous, as our Substitute and Representative, to make the vicarious atonement; to pay our fine and have us freed.

The wages of sin is death. Christ died for our sins. That is the Gospel whereby we are saved, 1 Cor. 15:2, 3.

## II

Christ became a curse for us — what for?

That upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

What is this "blessing of Abraham"? Abraham *believed* God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness, Gen. 15:6.

Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are as the sons of Abraham.

And the Scripture, foreseeing that God justifies the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel in advance unto Abraham, In thee shall all the nations be blessed, in the Seed of Abraham, in Him who is Christ, Gen. 12:3; Luke 1:55, 73; John 8:56. So, then, they that are of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham. In other words, the blessing of Abraham is justification by faith.

More than a thousand years after God had preached this Gospel to Abraham it was again preached by the prophet Habakkuk, 2:4:

"The righteous shall live by faith." Hundreds of years after Habakkuk the same Gospel was again preached by Paul:

"The just shall live by faith," Gal. 3:11; Rom. 1:17; 3:28; 4:3; Jas. 2:23.

More than a thousand years after Paul the same Gospel was again preached by Luther:

"The just shall live by faith."

If there had been a law given which could have made alive, verily righteousness would have been of the Law. But the Scriptures locked up all things under sin — in jail, with the Law as the jailer to hinder escape.

What for?

That the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given them that believe — the only way to get out of that prison.

Before the faith came, faith in the "Seed," Christ, we were kept under guard by the Law, locked up together for the faith to be revealed in Christ. And so the Law has been our boy-leader till Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith — which receives the merits of Christ.

But the faith — Christ — having come, we are no longer under a boy-leader. Now we are of age.

For you are all the sons of God through this faith in Christ Jesus.

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ, Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:4; Titus 3:5; Is. 61:10; Luke 15:22; Matt. 22:11; Ps. 132:9, 16.

The cloak of righteousness of the First-born cloaks all unrighteousness of all forlorn.

Jesus' blood and righteousness  
My jewels are and courtly dress;  
In these 'fore God I'll victor stand  
When entering the Promised Land.

Robed in Christ — or robbed of Christ.

In Christ there is no Jew nor Greek, there is no slave nor free, there is no male nor female; for you are as one person in union with Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; Col. 3:11. And if you belong to Christ, then are you Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

Triumphant logic! Q. E. D.

This glorious Gospel of freedom, this justification by faith alone, was preached to the Galatians and by them received joyfully. Alas! Soon Paul had to fire some sharp, searching questions.

1. O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was painted and placarded as crucified? 1 Cor. 2:2. Had you kept your eyes on the Crucified, you would have been saved from becoming bewitched by the satanic spell.

Crucified, that is the one thing needful. That is the one thing a thousand years later Luther preached. In the Wittenberg City Church Lucas Cranach painted Luther pointing the people to Christ crucified. Only this and nothing more.

2. This alone do I want to learn from you, Did you receive the

Spirit from the works of the Law or from the hearing of faith? — the preaching having faith for its content and aim.

That one thing decides; it is either — or. You know from your own personal experience you received the Spirit and became Christians when through the hearing of the Gospel God opened your heart and gave you faith, as in the case of Cornelius and Lydia, Acts 10:44; 16:14. You know this to be a fact, and this fact should turn you from the false preachers of works.

3. So very foolish are you? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now completing in the flesh? — when you are already complete in Christ, Col. 2:10.

This biting irony is a bold attempt to make them sensible, to see how senseless they are in their utter and deadly folly.

4. Did you experience so much in vain? if indeed it be in vain — which I cannot really believe of you. Paul is trying to touch their heart and conscience.

5. He that liberally supplies to you the Spirit and works wonders among you, Acts 14:3, does He do it from works of the Law or from the hearing of faith?

Again, your own experience tells you God is doing that not by the works of the Law but by the hearing of faith.

From the works of the Law — the very idea! Grotesque and blasphemous!

There are just two ways to be saved — by works and by faith.

1. The men of works shall live if they do the works of the Law. They cannot do them, and so they are under the curse.

The crown jeweler was offered a ruby, the finest by far he had ever seen but for one tiny flaw; and he rejected it from the regalia of England. At great cost a block of marble was brought from Paros for a statue of Napoleon, but Canova saw a tiny red line running through it; and he would not touch it with his chisel.

Whosoever shall keep the whole Law and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all, Jas. 2:10; Matt. 5:19.

2. The men of faith are justified and live by faith in Christ, who removed the curse from them by becoming a curse for them.

There is Mount Ebal of works with its curses. Here is Mount Gerizim of faith with its blessings, Deut. 27:11, 13. There is Mount Sinai with the Law. Here is Mount Calvary with its Gospel.

Here, and only here, is there real comfort for the sinner. Michelangelo was a colossal genius. He was the vigorous sculptor of the majestic Moses. He was the powerful painter of the terrible Last Judgment. He was the daring architect of St. Peter's, flinging into the sky the dome of the Pantheon over the cross. He was the Christian poet who at eighty wrote these fine lines:

My thoughts once prompt round hurtful things to twine;  
 What are they now when two dread deaths are near?  
 The one impends, the other shakes his spear.  
 Painting and sculpture's aid in vain I crave.  
 My only refuge is that Love Divine  
 Which from the cross stretched forth its arms to save.

#### FOURTH LECTURE

#### THE SENDING OF THE SON

Gal. 4:4-31

#### I

When the fulness of time came!

That was the time set before by the Father when the minor should become of age, the time foretold by the prophets.

Alexander the Great spread the Greek language over the world; Caesar Augustus made the Roman peace so that all the world could travel back and forth in safety; the Jews were spread all over the world, and in their synagogues, with the Greek Old Testament, made known the promises of the coming Messiah. The old priest Zacharias prophesied, "God hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David." The Simeons and Hannahs and others were waiting for the redemption of Israel. Up north the sinful Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well knew that Messiah cometh, He that is called Christ; when He is come, He will declare unto us all things, John 4:25; Luke 1:69; 2:25, 30; 3:15.

Roman writers tell us even heathen looked for a great deliverer out of Judea. The time was when Caesar Augustus ruled the Roman world empire, when Quirinius was governor of Syria, when Herod the Great was king of Judea. In the history of the world God's hour struck, and God was there on the hour.

#### The Sending

God sent forth His Son, His Only-begotten, the Son of His love, in whom He was well pleased. God sent Him forth out of Himself, out of His bosom, out of His glory, out of the dim and distant eternity, into time, out of high heaven into the world below, sent Him in a manner most wonderful.

#### The Manner

1. Out of a woman, no human father, conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, true God and true man in one person, the wonderful God-man.

Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh. And the learned monk Dionysius, who modestly called himself Exiguus, Little, about 500 at Rome began to count the Christian era *ab incarnatione Domini*, from which we got our A. D.



2. Come to be under the Law. From birth subject to the Law like everybody else. Though He was God's Son, yet learned He His obedience and became perfect through suffering. It became Him to fulfil all righteousness. He challenged the world, "Who of you convicteth Me of sin?" And the challenge still goes unanswered. Pilate's wife called Him "that just man"; Pilate examined Him and could find no fault in Him; on the brink of eternity Judas shrieked his farewell sermon, "I have betrayed the innocent blood!" The centurion confessed, "Surely this was a righteous man and the Son of God." He was "the Righteous." The God-born became the woman-born, and He became Law-bound, subject to the Law; and He kept the Law perfectly.

### The Purpose

1. That He might buy free those under the Law.

All were under the Law, none could keep the Law; so all were children of disobedience, children of wrath, under the curse of the Law of God. Christ bought us free from the curse. How? Having become a curse in our stead. How? By hanging on the cursed tree.

Christ kept the Law in our stead, and now Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth, Rom. 10:4; 5:19; 6:16-22; 2 Cor. 5:21. He bought us free. The fine is paid, the debtor is freed, the year of jubilee is come. Thank God for the world's great Emancipator! Wonders never cease. More in store.

2. That we might receive sonship. We minors, legally infants, are now declared of age. Freed from guardians, governors, and stewards, we now have the standing of sons. When the Roman boy became of age, he put on the dress of manhood, the *toga virilis*. Christ is our *Toga virilis*.

The Son of God became the Son of man to make the sons of men the sons of God. By the perfect obedience of Christ we children of the devil have become the children of God.

When the Danish missionaries on Malabar put a convert to translate Luther's Small Catechism, he dropped his pen when he came to the sentence that we are the sons of God. "It is too much; let me put, 'they shall be permitted to kiss His feet.'" Yes, too much for us, but not for God. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God; and such we are, 1 John 3:1.

"And because ye are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!" God sent forth His Son among sinners: God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into saints. And at once the Spirit in our hearts cries and causes us to cry, cry eagerly

and joyously, Abba! Father! Luther says, "This little word 'Father,' spoken rightly from the heart, passeth all the eloquence of Demosthenes, Cicero, and of the most eloquent of rhetoricians that ever were in the world."

Note the Spirit of the Father is the Spirit of the Son, and so proceeds from the Father and the Son. Note also the Holy Trinity at work to work our salvation.

"Wherefore thou art no longer a slave," "a minor legally not different from a slave," "but a son," — become of age, having the standing of a son. More in store!

"And if a son, then an heir," joint heir with Christ. That is the heavenly peak gleaming in glory. No more can be in store. *Ne plus ultra* — nothing beyond except the realization.

"Through God" — all, all this. Beginning middle, and end — all through God. What hast thou that thou didst not receive?

Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift! Unspeakable; with Johann Menzer we shout:

Oh, that I had a thousand voices,  
A mouth to speak with thousand tongues!  
My heart, which in the Lord rejoices,  
Then would proclaim in grateful songs  
To all, wherever I might be,  
What great things God hath done for me.

## II

We are heirs of God through God.

This blessed fact gives dynamic force to a passionate appeal. "Formerly ye did not know the true God." Ye were without Christ, and so ye were without God and hope in the world, Eph. 2:12. "Then ye slaved for them that by nature are not gods at all" — an idol is nothing in the world, 1 Thess. 4:5; Eph. 4:18; 1 Cor. 8:4; 10:21; 12:2.

Matt. 10:40. "Where, then, is that gratulation of yourselves" for having heard the Gospel? "For I bear you witness that, if possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. So, then, am I become your enemy by telling you the truth? My little children, of whom I am in birth pains until Christ be fully formed in you" — it seems here he breaks off and breaks down. It seems we can see his fatherly breast heaving in anguish, his lips quivering, and the water standing in his eyes.

Wonderful man, this Paul!

Having proved his teaching of justification by faith alone, he pictures it with the story of Hagar, the slave woman, and Sarah, the free woman. "Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother." And he ends in triumph — "Wherefore, brethren, we are not children of a slave and therefore slaves to the Law, but of the free woman and therefore free men," through the freedom wherewith Christ made us free. Rom. 9:7-9.

When Charles II became king, he dismissed Milton from his post of Latin secretary, held under Cromwell, fined him, and publicly burned his writings on liberty. Now poor and blind, he wrote *Paradise Lost*. Later the dissolute king felt the need of the matchless talents of the mighty poet and asked him back to his post with all its great advantages. He spurned the splendid bribe and chose poverty, neglect, a good conscience, and liberty. "Give me the liberty to believe and to utter freely, according to conscience, above all other liberties."

Christ made us free; now let us ring the Liberty Bell and proclaim freedom to all the earth.

Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem were born  
But not within thyself, thy soul shall be forlorn;  
The cross of Golgotha thou lookest to in vain  
Unless within thyself it be set up again.

"But now ye have come to know the true God — or rather are known and acknowledged by God as His own." It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. God has done it all; you have done nothing at all. Salvation is not achieved, but received. Luther puts it very neatly: "Not therefore are they known because they know; but, on the contrary, because they have been known, therefore do they know." Phil. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:19; Matt. 7:23; John 10:15, 27; 1 John 4:10; 1 Cor. 8:3; 13:12.

Heirs of God through God, "How is it ye are turning back again to the weak and beggarly elements for which ye are wanting to slave over again?" Surely a severely scornful sentence. Do you prefer the slavery of heathenism and Judaism to the glorious liberty of the sons and heirs of God? "You are strictly keeping the Jewish Sabbath-days and new moons and the seventh months and festival seasons and years — new year and sabbatical year." And you are keeping them in order to be saved when you already are the sons and heirs of God! You are deserting the liberty of God's sons and putting your necks into the yoke of the slavery of Judaism.

"I fear for you; mayhap I have toiled for you for nothing." Luther finely says: "These words breathe the tears of Paul." Anguished in heart, Paul yet sees a glimmer of hope; the senseless Galatians may yet come to their senses and come back into the liberty of the Gospel. They had been "bewitched." But he hopes the satanic spell can yet be broken. He fondly recalls the former days to his "brethren."

"You know at the first I preached the Gospel to you because of illness. And my appearance was a temptation to you to despise and loathe me, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus."

**FIFTH LECTURE**  
**CHRISTIAN FREEDOM**

Gal. 5:1-12

**I**

**Christ Set Us Free**

The eternal Son of God left the throne of glory He had with the Father before the world was and through the door of the blessed Virgin Mary stepped into time and the world and was cradled in the lowly manger at Bethlehem. And He did this in order to set us free.

The Scriptures, yes, God Himself, had shut up all things under sin — as in a prison.

But God is gracious and said, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom," Job 33:24. Christ gave His life a ransom for us and so bought us out of prison and set us free. He set us free from the curse of the Law; free from the bondage of sin; free from the tyranny of Satan; free from an accusing conscience; free from the fear of death; free from the wrath of God. If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed, free in the glorious freedom of the children of God, John 8:32, 36; Rom. 6:22; 8:2, 21; 2 Cor. 3:17.

William Tyndale wrote: "The Law and the Gospel are two keys. The Law is the key that shutteth up all men under condemnation, and the Gospel is the key which opens the door and lets them out." Bunyan's Pilgrims were shut up in the Doubting Castle of Giant Despair, but they got out by the Key of Promise which Christian found in his bosom.

**II**

**For Freedom Christ Set Us Free**

For freedom! To have and to hold, to enjoy and to cherish forever. Christ set us free at the tremendous cost of becoming a curse for us. Remember that and value that.

**III**

**Therefore!**

Keep standing fast therefore and stop enduring again a yoke of slavery.

You had been entangled in the yoke of the slavery of your vile heathen religion, and now you are threatened to become entangled in the yoke of the slavery of Judaism. Stand fast! "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty!"

Stand fast! In the face of certain death Christ boldly said, "I am the Son of the Living God."

Stand fast! In the face of jail and scourging Peter said, "We must obey God rather than men."

Stand fast! The Pope had damned him and the Kaiser banned him, yet in the face of hell-fire and earth-fire Luther said, "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise."

Stand fast! Be a Bayard, without fear and without reproach.

Stand fast! Be a Stonewall Jackson.

Stand fast! In the face of the fiery lava of Mount Vesuvius rolling over him, the Roman guard at Pompeii stood fast. He had orders to stand and no orders to go away.

Stand fast! The boy stood on the burning deck,  
Whence all but he had fled.

In the face of the flames he would stand because his father had told him to stand.

It can be done! It has been done!

Stand fast! Now comes the pitched and decisive battle that will make or break Christianity, the most momentous moment in the history of the Church. Paul fires five quick shots.

1. Behold, I, Paul, say to you, If ye get circumcised, Christ will do you no good!

What a thunderbolt! It is either—or. Either Christ or circumcision. It cannot be Christ and circumcision. That mixture kills Christianity and also Judaism. It is Christ or anti Christ.

2. Yes, I testify again to every man receiving circumcision that he is a debtor to do the whole Law.

Another thunderbolt! Did you bargain for that? Why, even the false brethren themselves do not keep it. Yes, and even Peter himself called it a yoke which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. And he said that at Jerusalem! Gal. 6:13; Acts 15:10.

And so, look before you leap! If ye get circumcised, ye will be under the curse of the Law. Circumcision is excision. That should wake them up and give them pause.

3. Ye get severed from Christ, ye who try to be justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace—as a ship driven out of her course upon the rocks and wrecked. A third thunderbolt!

Cut off from Christ, you are without God and without hope in the world. Cut off from the Vine, the branches will be burned, Eph. 2:12; John 15:6. The Master is just as severe as His servant.

4. We, by the Spirit, from faith confidently and eagerly expect the hope of righteousness. The Spirit works faith. Faith is the source of our expecting righteousness. To be sure, we have righteousness now, but we hope to be declared righteous in public at the Judgment and to receive our crown of righteousness. Titus 2:13; 2 Tim. 4:8; Matt. 25:34.

They by works, we by faith; they by the flesh, we by the Spirit. What a yawning gulf!

5. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; but what counts is faith working through love. Again: Neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, Gal. 6:15. Once again: Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God, 1 Cor. 7:19.

Circumcision is good for nothing — to *save* us. Uncircumcision is good for nothing — to *save* us. Timothy was not a better Christian for being circumcised. Titus was not a better Christian for being uncircumcised. Then what does save? What does save is faith. What faith? Faith in Christ, which, of course, works through love. A living faith is a loving faith; and a loving faith is a laboring faith. Faith without works is dead — having no fruit. Works without faith are dead — having no root.

The Savior says: "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments. This is My commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you. By this all men shall know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another," John 14:15, 21; 15:12-14; 13:34, 35; 1 Thess. 4:9.

Luther says: "Faith without love is, as it were, a dream, an image of faith; just as the appearance of a face in a mirror is not a real face." Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote: "Faith is the source; charity, that is, the whole Christian life, is the stream from it." Faith, love, hope — that is the sum of Christianity.

The Christian has two hands. In the article on justification God's Gospel hand opens my empty receiving hand of faith and fills it with Christ's righteousness.

Now my thankful giving hand will open and give itself to do good works of love to the neighbor.

Faith is the strong mother giving birth to lovely love. Justification gives life to sanctification. Saved to serve. Are you winsome? Then win some. Each one reach one.

Paul adds: "Ye were running beautifully; who hindered you that ye should not obey the truth?" It wasn't God. So who was it? Beware! "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Paul hopefully adds, "I have confidence in you that ye will be none otherwise minded." You will repent and return to your Savior.

Paul now pays his last respects to the false brethren everlastingly shouting circumcision: "They who would unsettle you ought even to have themselves mutilated" — like the frenzied priests of the vile Cybele and others. "Lutherlike in its force and audacity," says Plumptre. With this parting shot of scorn blazing at white heat, Paul turns his back on the sneaking and sinister Judaizers.

Oak Park, Ill.

(To be concluded)

WM. DALLMANN



## Entwürfe über die von der Synodalkonferenz angenommene Epistelreihe

### Vierundzwanzigster Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Offenb. 3, 7—13

Gott gebe uns viele Philadelphia-Gemeinden! Dieser Gebetswunsch wird durch unsern heutigen Text veranlaßt. Was ist eine rechte Philadelphia-Gemeinde? Unser Text gibt uns die Antwort.

#### Eine rechte Philadelphia-Gemeinde

1. Das Lob, das der Herr über sie ausspricht
2. Die Ermahnung, die er an sie ergehen läßt
3. Die Verheißung, die er ihr gibt

#### 1

B. 7. Der hier redet — lobt, ermahnt, verheißt —, ist „der Heilige“, der selbst ohne Sünde ist, aber die Sünden der ganzen Welt auf sich genommen hat; „der Wahrhaftige“, auf dessen Wort man sich verlassen kann; „der da hat den Schlüssel Davids“, der da ist der rechte David selbst, der Menschensohn, der Heiland der Welt; der Allwissende („Ich weiß deine Werke“, B. 8). Dies müssen wir durchweg im Auge behalten; denn das gibt Lob, Ermahnung, Verheißung ihren rechten Wert.

a. „Du hast eine kleine Kraft“, B. 8. Die Gemeinde zu Philadelphia war nicht groß, wohl auch arm an irdischem Gut und ohne vor der Welt angesehene Leute. Vor der Welt war sie ein kleines, verachtetes Häuflein. Und doch hatte sie „Kraft“, war mächtig und herrlich in den Augen ihres Gottes. Wie so? Das hören wir in dem weiteren Lob, das der Herr über sie ergehen läßt.

b. „Du hast mein Wort behalten“, B. 8. Gottes Wort, das Gnadenevangelium, ist die „Kraft Gottes, die da selig macht alle, die daran glauben“, Röm. 1, 16; 1 Petr. 1, 5. Darauf kommt alles an: nicht nur, daß eine Gemeinde Gottes Wort hat, sondern daß sie sich danach richtet im Glauben und im Leben. Das wird noch durch die folgenden Worte betont.

c. „Du hast meinen Namen nicht verleugnet“, B. 8. Zum Glauben muß das Bekenntnis kommen, Matth. 10, 32. 33. Wie mancher Christ verleugnet, gleich dem Petrus, seinen Heiland, anstatt daß er ihn vor der Welt bekennt, ob er wohl deswegen Spott und Hohn erdulden muß!

Bist du eine rechte Philadelphia-Gemeinde? Gott sei Dank, du hast Gottes Wort rein und lauter. Glaubst ein jeder unter uns es aber auch von ganzem Herzen? Gründet jeder seine Seligkeit allein auf

Gottes Gnade in Christo oder vielleicht gar auf seine eigene Gerechtigkeit? Richtet sich ein jeder in seinem Leben nach Gottes Wort, oder geht mancher seine eigenen Wege? Bekennt auch ein jeder seinen Christenglauben frei und lauter in dieser gottlosen Welt? Wohl dir, wenn du diese Fragen bejaßen kannst; dann hast du auch eine „kleine Kraft“. Ohnmächtig und verachtet in den Augen der Welt, bist du doch erfüllt mit rechter Gotteskraft und bist „das Salz der Erde“ und „das Licht der Welt“. So halte denn, was du hast. Das ist zweitens die Ermahnung, die der Herr, dein Gott und Heiland, an dich ergehen läßt.

## 2

a. „Halte, was du hast!“ B. 11. Es gibt keinen größeren Schatz auf Erden als Gottes Wort, Ps. 119, 96—105. — Nur zu viele aber haben es aus eigener Schuld verloren. Das ist auch jetzt der Jammer. Lehrwillfür nimmt je länger, je mehr überhand. Unionisterei ist an der Tagesordnung in der äußeren Christenheit. Auch uns droht Gefahr, 1 Kor. 10, 12. Wir, die wir an Gottes Wort festhalten, werden verspottet, als seien wir unwissenschaftlich, verknöchert, altmodisch, rechtshaberisch, unverträglich. Gott erbarme sich unser und seiner ganzen Christenheit!

b. Mit dem Verlust des Wortes Gottes verliert der Mensch seine Seligkeit. „Daß niemand deine Krone nehme“, B. 11. Verlust an Geld und Gut, Verlust der Gesundheit, des Ansehens bei Menschen usw., das alles läßt sich nicht vergleichen mit dem Verlust der Himmelskrone. Und wie bald kann doch der Mensch vor den Richterstuhl Gottes gestellt werden! 1 Petr. 1, 24. „Siehe, ich komme bald!“ B. 11. — Doch, wie wir nun drittens hören werden, Gott selbst will und wird uns erhalten und Segen und Gedeihen zu unserer kirchlichen Arbeit geben.

## 3

a. „Wer aber überwindet“, sich im Glauben fest an Gottes Wort und an seinen Heiland hält, „den will ich machen“ usw., B. 12. Schon in diesem Leben ist ein solcher ein fester Pfeiler in der Kirche, wird dann auch ewig erhalten und herrlich geziert werden, wird Gottes Namen tragen, Gottes Kind sein, 1 Joh. 3, 1, 2, wird eingehen in das neue Jerusalem, wird seinem Heiland, der den neuen Namen seiner Herrlichkeit trägt, ähnlich sein, Phil. 3, 21; Joh. 17, 22, 24.

Wird aber eine Gemeinde in der Versuchung dieser Welt bestehen können? Darauf antwortet B. 10. Die Stunde der Versuchung wird nicht ausbleiben. Auch jetzt wieder erfüllt sich das Wort unsers Textes: „die kommen wird über der ganzen Welt Kreis“. (Der Prediger beschreibe recht anschaulich die jetzigen traurigen Zustände in der Welt: Abfall von Gottes Wort, Sündendienst, Krieg und Kriegsgeschrei usw.) Damit versucht Gott die Menschen. Aber wie wenige lassen sich weisen! Doch Gott wird diejenigen, welche ihm treu bleiben, erhalten. Das ist unser Trost.

b. Jede christliche Gemeinde soll eine Missionsgemeinde sein. Ihr gilt der Befehl Mark. 16, 15. Wir sind dazu auf Erden, Christi Reich zu bauen durch die Predigt des Evangeliums. Und nun sagt uns unser Text, daß Gott diese unsere Arbeit mit Erfolg krönen wird, V. 8. Gott, unser Heiland, hat seiner Philadelphia-Gemeinde eine „offene Thür“ gegeben, er, der da hat den Schlüssel Davids usw., V. 7. Gott allein kann Segen und Gedeihen zu unserm kirchlichen Werk verleihen. Wir sollen zwar mit allem Fleiß das Evangelium verkündigen; doch Gott muß den Segen geben. Der wird aber auch nicht ausbleiben. Ja, selbst von den ärgsten Feinden Christi, den Juden, werden etliche bekehrt und selig werden, V. 9. Das soll uns recht Mut machen zur Missionsarbeit. Wir sind oft gar furchtsam und verzagt, weil wir auf uns selbst setzen anstatt auf Gottes gewisse und herrliche Verheißungen, 1 Kor. 15, 57, 58.

„Wer Ohren hat“ usw., V. 13. Gott lasse unsere Gemeinde eine rechte Philadelphia-Gemeinde sein; gebe uns auch sonst recht viele solche Gemeinden!

J. S. C. Frick

### Fünfundzwanzigster Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Röm. 8, 31—39

Die altkirchliche Perikope für diesen Sonntag handelt von dem „Greuel der Verwüstung an heiliger Stätte“, beschäftigt sich daher zunächst mit der Zerstörung Jerusalems und deren Gefahren und Leiden, warnt die Christen damaliger Zeit zur Flucht und beschreibt dann die Trübsale und Verführungen der letzten, bösen Zeit vor dem jüngsten Gericht. — Unser Text gibt uns nun herrlichen Trost für diese letzte, betrühte Zeit, da Satan ausgegangen ist, die Heiden zu verführen (Offenb. 20, 8) und die Welt, insbesondere die Christenheit, mit Trübsal und Angst zu quälen. — Unsere Seligkeit ist jedoch fest und gewiß. Warum? Betrachten wir den herrlichen

#### Christentrost „Gott für uns“

Gott ist für uns; darum

1. kann kein Feind uns die Seligkeit streitig machen
2. kann uns keine Gewalt der Feinde von der rettenden Liebe Gottes in Christo scheiden

#### 1

Unser Text beginnt mit einem Triumphruf, V. 31. Ja, Gott ist für uns, ist mit uns, ist unser Hort und Trost, unser Heiland und Seligmacher, ist auf unserer Seite. Das beweist die ewige Vergebung und Verordnung, V. 28; die Verufung, die Rechtfertigung durch den Glauben an Christum Jesum in dieser Zeit, V. 30. Wäre Gott nicht

für uns, so hätte er uns nicht von Ewigkeit zur Seligkeit erwählt, hätte uns in der Zeit nicht berufen, belehrt und im Glauben erhalten, Kap. 5, 1 ff. Er hätte dann auch nicht Jesum Christum vorgestellt zu einem Gnadenstuhl durch den Glauben in seinem Blut, hätte keine Erlösung durch Jesum Christum geschehen lassen, Kap. 3, 24. 25.

Aber da nun Gott für uns ist, so kann auch kein Feind uns unsere Seligkeit rauben, uns beschuldigen, uns verdammen, uns die Seligkeit schwankend machen, B. 31b—34. — a. Gegen Gott, unsern Schutz-herren, kann kein Feind ankommen, nicht der Teufel, nicht die Hölle, nicht das Fleisch, nicht die Welt, 1 Kor. 15, 25—27a. Wie selig sind wir! — b. Ferner kann kein Feind es zuwege bringen, daß wir nicht alles von unserm gnädigen Gott erhalten, was wir für unsere Seligkeit nötig haben, B. 32. Der Gott, der seines eigenen Sohnes nicht verschont, der dieses große Opfer für uns gebracht hat, Joh. 3, 16, der wird uns in ihm auch alles andere zur Erlangung der Seligkeit Nötige schenken. Das Größere steht ja voran, so muß auch das Geringe folgen. Wir sind auserwählt, erlöst; berufen, gerecht und herrlich gemacht durch den Glauben an Christum; Gott wird uns daher auch in Gnaden zur ewigen Seligkeit erhalten, Phil. 1, 6. Wie selig sind wir! — c. Kein Feind kann uns ferner wegen der uns noch anklebenden Sünde mit Erfolg anklagen; denn Gott spricht uns ja in Christo Jesu gerecht, B. 33. Er ist der Richter, nicht der Teufel; er ist der Gott Himmels und der Erde, nicht der Teufel; er nimmt die Anklage Satans nicht an, sondern erklärt uns um Christi willen für gerecht und selig. Wie selig sind wir! — d. Kein Feind kann uns verdammen; denn: B. 34. Wie selig sind wir! Der Vater verdammt uns nicht; er hat ja seinen eingebornen Sohn für uns dahingegeben. Der Sohn verdammt uns nicht; er ist ja für uns gestorben, auferstanden, gen Himmel gefahren und hat sich zur Rechten Gottes gesetzt, und das alles, um uns selig zu machen. So können unsere Feinde mit ihren Anklagen gegen uns nichts ausrichten.

„Gott für uns“ — welch süßer Trost liegt nicht darin für uns! Das verbürgt uns Schutz gegen alle Feinde unserer Seligkeit, die uns die Seligkeit absprechen wollen. Denken wir aber über diesen Trost auch fleißig nach? Das Kirchenjahr neigt sich dem Ende zu; und im vergangenen Kirchenjahr hat uns jede Predigt diesen herrlichen Trost „Gott für uns“ gebracht. Haben wir uns dafür dankbar bewiesen? Haben wir als von Gott erwählte, berufene und gerechtesprochene Christen im Kirchenjahr gelebt? Haben wir dieses süße Trostwort auch ausgebreitet? Haben wir uns dessen in allen Leiden der Zeit getröstet? Es gibt ja Kirchengemeinschaften, die da sagen, wir könnten und dürften unserer Seligkeit nicht gewiß sein. Aber hier lehrt uns Gott, daß unsere Seligkeit gegen alle Angriffe der Feinde so gewiß ist wie unsere Erwählung, Erlösung, Berufung und Rechtfertigung.

## 2

Ist Gott aber für uns, so kann auch kein noch so gewaltfamer Angriff der Feinde uns von der rettenden Liebe Gottes in Christo scheiden.

Im ersten Teil des Textes redet Paulus von Angriffen indirekter Art, die Gott etwa bestimmen möchten, uns die Seligkeit abzuspochen. Hier redet er von „gewaltfamen Angriffen“, die direkt gegen unsere Person gerichtet sind. (Vgl. Stöckhardt, „Römerbrief“, S. 410.)

Allerdings, die Christen haben oft, wo Gott das zuläßt, Schreckliches zu leiden, R. 35b. 36. Denken wir nur an die Märtyrer der ersten drei Jahrhunderte der christlichen Kirche, Apost. 8, 1 ff. Denken wir auch an die Christen in Rußland, die Schreckliches haben erleiden müssen. Und solch greuliche Verfolgungen benutzen Satan, Welt und unser Fleisch dazu, uns dahin zu bringen, daß wir unser Vertrauen zu Christo wegwerfen. Aber Gott erhält seine Auserwählten im Glauben, wie er z. B. die Märtyrer im Glauben erhalten hat; und so bleiben sie in seiner Liebe bis zu ihrem seligen Tod.

Ja, noch mehr, R. 37; vgl. 1 Joh. 5, 4. 5. Durch Gottes Gnade wird der Auserwählten Glaube im Leiden nicht schwach; im Gegenteil, er erstarkt (englische Bibel: „more than conquerors“; vgl. Hus, Sabonarola u. a.). Und so besiegelt denn der Apostel die christliche Glaubens- und Seligkeitsgewißheit mit dem heiligen Hymnus, R. 38. 39, der R. 35a weiter ausführt. Allerdings ist dies keine fleischliche Gewißheit, sondern die durch den Heiligen Geist im Wort gewirkte christliche Gewißheit, der Glaube selbst. Das ist eben der Glaube, daß ich sage: „Ich bin gewiß.“ — Weder der Tod, R. 36, noch dieses irdische Leben mit all seinen Wechselfällen, weder Engel noch Herrschaften, die höheren Engelordnungen; weder die Gegenwart, die uns oft lästig ist, noch das Schwere, das die Zukunft uns bringen mag (noch Mächte, dunameis, wenn der Ausdruck wirklich echt ist); weder widrige Schidungen von oben noch Nachtwirkungen aus der Tiefe, die von den gottfeindlichen Mächten, den bösen Geistern, ausgehen; noch irgendeine andere Kreatur wird uns (Christen) durch Gewalt scheiden können von der Liebe, „die Gott uns in Christo, unserm Heiland und Herrn, bereits erwiesen hat und noch fort und fort erweist“, ein vollerer Ausdruck für „Liebe Christi.“ (Vgl. Stöckhardt, S. 412 f.) Nur Gott kann uns von seiner Liebe scheiden; und das will er eben nicht, weil er unsere Seligkeit alles Ernstes will.

Erst im ewigen Leben werden wir erkennen, wie unbeschreibbar groß Gottes Liebe gegen uns, der wir unsere Seligkeit verdanken, ist. Aber wandeln wir in der Liebe, indem wir seine Gebote halten, 1 Joh. 2, 3 ff. — Vgl. 1 Joh. 4, 19. Und lieben wir im Glauben auch unsern Nächsten, 1 Joh. 4, 20. 21, indem wir unsern Blick gerichtet halten auf die Herrlichkeit, die unser im Himmel wartet, 2 Kor. 4, 17. 18.

J. E. Müller

**Sechszwanzigster Sonntag nach Trinitatis**

Hebr. 4, 14—16

Im verfloffenen Kirchenjahr hat uns Gott wiederum gesegnet mit allerlei geistlichem Segen in himmlischen Gütern. Man weise nach, wie Gott das getan hat durch Wort und Sakrament, in Haus und Schule und Kirche. In guten Tagen hat er uns vor Hochmut, Verweltlichung, Mißbrauch seiner Güter bewahrt, in trüben Tagen, wenn Not, Krankheit, Tod einkehrte, mit reichem Trost ausgerichtet, Gewissensnot beruhigt usw. Dafür gebührt ihm allein die Ehre und der Dank, Eph. 1, 3. Dieser Segen ist allein durch Christum vermittelt, daher sich der Dank darin äußern soll, daß man vor allem Gott als den Vater unsers Herrn Jesu Christi lobt, daß er uns seinen Sohn zum Mittler und Hohenpriester gesandt und geoffenbart hat. Unser Text gibt uns Anleitung zu solchem Dank.

**Wie erweisen wir unsern Dank dafür, daß wir einen großen Hohenpriester haben?**

Unser Text weist auf zweierlei:

1. „Lasset uns halten an dem Bekenntnis!“
2. „Lasset uns hinzutreten mit Freudigkeit zu dem Gnadenstuhl!“

**1**

B. 14. Im Alten Testament hatte Gott selber das hohepriesterliche Amt eingesetzt, 2 Mos. 28, 1 ff.; Hebr. 5, 4, als Mittler zwischen sich und den Menschen, um das Bundesverhältnis aufzurichten und, wenn nötig, wiederherzustellen, 2 Mos. 18, 19; Hebr. 2, 17. Das geschah durch Opfer, 3 Mos. 1—7, zur Versöhnung, 3 Mos. 16, 30; durch Fürbitte, 4 Mos. 16, 44—50; durch Austeilung des Segens, 4 Mos. 6, 23 ff.

Wir haben einen großen Hohenpriester, größer als Moses, Hebr. 3, 2 ff., als Aaron und die levitischen Priester, 5, 7 ff., als die Engel, 1, 4—2, 5. Unser Hohenpriester ist Jesus. Das ist der Name eines wahren Menschenkinds, Luf. 1, 31, das aber zugleich Gottes Sohn ist, Text, B. 14; Luf. 2, 11. Der hat nicht in einem irdischen Tempel sein Amt verwaltet, Hebr. 8, 5; 9, 1—10. Als der Sohn Gottes war er selbst, als er auf Erden wandelte, als er litt und starb und ins Grab gelegt wurde, im Himmel, Joh. 3, 13. Nachdem er auch nach seiner menschlichen Natur in den völligen und beständigen Gebrauch seiner göttlichen Herrlichkeit eingetreten ist und sich gesetzt hat zur Rechten seines Vaters, verwaltet er noch immer sein hohepriesterliches Amt. Nun wendet er die Güter, die er durch Leben, Leiden und Sterben, in tätigem und leidendem Gehorsam, erworben hat, Hebr. 1, 3; 2, 6—18; 5, 6—10; 9, 11—28, den Menschen zu durch Wort und Sakrament, Hebr. 10, 22; 12, 24, 25; wirkt Glauben und stärkt und erhält uns



darin sowie in der Heiligung, Hebr. 12, 2; legt Fürbitte für uns ein, 9, 24; 12, 24, und führt uns endlich zur Herrlichkeit, 6, 18; 9, 15. 28; 12, 22. 23.

Wahrlich ein großer Hoherpriester, der Herzog unserer Seligkeit, 2, 10, der uns selig machen kann immerdar, 7, 25.

Diesen Hohenpriester haben wir. Durch den Glauben ist er unser eigen geworden, dein, mein Hoherpriester. Nun laßt uns dankbar sein, indem wir halten an dem Bekenntnis Christi, unsers Hohenpriesters, in Wort und Tat. Schämen wir uns seines Wortes und Evangeliums nicht. Laßt uns es vor aller Welt bekennen, gerade den modernen Irrlehrern gegenüber, daß wir allein in ihm, in seinem stellvertretenden Leiden und Sterben, Trost und Hilfe haben, Apost. 4, 12; 1 Kor. 2, 2; Gal. 6, 14. Mit dem Evangelium von Christo, mit seinem Wort, verlieren wir unsern Hohenpriester, sind wir verloren, Matth. 10, 33; Hebr. 2, 1—4; 3, 1—4, 11; 6, 4—6; 10, 26—31; 12, 25. Unglaube, der sich in Verleugnung des Hohenpriesters in Wort und Werk, Sündendienst, Weltliebe usw. äußert, ist Abfall von dem von Gott uns gesandten Heiland und Hohenpriester und damit von Gott, dem Vater unsers Herrn Jesu Christi. Darum laßt uns halten an dem Bekenntnis!

## 2

B. 16. Es ist allerdings der Thron Gottes, des Richters über Lebendige und Tote, vor dem und vor dessen Wort keine Creatur unsichtbar ist, Hebr. 4, 13. Aber auf diesem Thron sitzt Jesus nicht als strenger Richter, sondern als mitleidiger Hoherpriester, der unsere Sünde auf sich genommen und abgebüßt hat und dabei versucht ist allenthalben gleichwie wir, doch ohne Sünde, B. 15. Er weiß, wie Satan und die Welt uns zusehen können; er hat es selber an seinem eigenen Leib und an seiner Seele erfahren, welch furchtbarer Kampf es ist, den ein Kind Gottes wider die Mächte der Finsternis führen muß. Lied 39, 11—13. Zu dem kannst du zu jeder Zeit hinzutreten mit Freudigkeit. Ihm darfst du frank und frei alles sagen, was dich bekümmert, was dein Herz beschwert, geistliche und leibliche Nöte und Anfechtungen. Er hat selber sie durchgemacht, sie selber erfahren, und hat Mitleid mit deiner Schwachheit, kann dir aus seiner Stärke in aller Not Trost und Kraft geben. Bei ihm findest du Barmherzigkeit, ein warmes, verständnisvolles, liebevolles Herz und Gnade, die alle Sünde vergibt, alles Unrecht, das du getan hast, zudeckt um seines unschuldigen Leidens willen. Nicht nur Zusicherung seiner Gnade, sondern wirkliche Hilfe findest du bei ihm, nicht immer sofort, zu der Zeit, auf die Weise, wie du es wohl wünschst; aber ganz gewiß, wenn es not ist, wenn seine Zeit und Stunde gekommen ist.

Laßt uns von dem Vorrecht, das Jesus uns erworben hat, Gebrauch machen. Wenn dein Arzt dir heilkräftige Medizin verschreibt, so

wärest du ihm undankbar für die Mühe, die er sich um dich gemacht hat, wenn du die Medizin nicht gebrauchen würdest. Dein Heiland hat sich viel mehr Mühe um dich gemacht. Tu ihm nicht die Unehre an, daß du seine dir angebotene Gnade übersiehst, vernachlässigst und überall, nur nicht bei ihm, Hilfe suchst, wenn dir Hilfe not ist. Lied 39, 7—10. 15.  
T h. L ä t s c h

### Siebenundzwanzigster Sonntag nach Trinitatis

Offenb. 22, 12—21

Nachdem der Gläubige die Heilige Schrift von Anfang bis zum Schluß aufmerksam gelesen, dann: Röm. 11, 33—36. Und er blickt zurück, dann vorwärts, dann aufwärts. Er hat gefunden den Baum des Lebens, das Wasser des Lebens, das Buch des Lebens. Alles Heil wird ihm noch einmal am Schluß zugesprochen und versiegelt.

Das Schlußwort der Heiligen Schrift: „Die Gnade unsers Herrn Jesu Christi sei mit euch allen! Amen“

1. Am Schluß der Zeit
2. Am Ende des Kirchenjahres

#### 1

A. Jesus offenbart in Gnaden das große Ereignis, das am Schluß der Zeiten stattfinden wird, Matth. 24 und 25, Luf. 21 u. a. a. O. Die Wichtigkeit, solches zu bedenken, betont er auch am Anfang unsers Textes: „Und siehe!“ Seine Person, er selbst, kommt. Er bringt mit sich den von ihm gesetzten Lohn. Diesen wird er jeglichem austeilen. Er und sein Lohn gehen jeden einzelnen Menschen persönlich an. Auch jeder, der jetzt zuhört, wird dann die hier prophezeite Erfahrung persönlich machen.

a. Lohn, Lohn! Das will der natürliche Mensch: Lohn für seine Werke, Matth. 7, 22; 19, 20; 25, 44; Luf. 10, 29. Jetzt tut Jesus des Selbstgerechten Willen und kommt mit dem Lohn. Lied 246, 5a. Aber auch die groben Sünder erhalten an jenem Tage ihren Lohn, B. 15. Das Wort Hund bezeichnet die Feinde Christi, weil sie gegen ihn wüten und ihn anfallen. Im Morgenland sind Hunde die verachtetsten Wesen. Zauberer, Surer, Mörder, Götzendiener, — ihre Werke sind die Früchte ihres Unglaubens. Alle Ungläubigen wird Jesus belohnen, B. 15b. Ihr Lohn ist der Ausschluß aus der B. 14 erwähnten ewigen Stadt, Kap. 21, 8; Matth. 25, 41. 46a. Das ist der Lohn der Verachtung der auch am Schlußwort der Heiligen Schrift angebotenen Gnade, den Christus am Schluß der Zeit austeilen wird.

b. Lied 435, 5. Kein Lohn, kein Lohn! So betet der Bekehrte. Wird Jesus solcher Bitte Gehör schenken? Ja, er wird die Gläubigen

nicht nach Verdienst belohnen, V. 14. Der Gedankengang: 1 Mos. 2, 9; 3, 22—24; 49, 10 f.; 1 Joh. 1, 7; Offenb. 7, 14, 15; Jes. 61, 10. Die Gläubigen haben Macht am Holz des Lebens, sie haben Recht an Christo, sie dürfen ihn gebrauchen als ihren Heiland, der ihnen das ewige Leben schenkt. Sie sind glücklich im Genuß der Früchte der Erlösung. Der Himmel steht ihnen offen. In Dankbarkeit halten sie nun seine Gebote. Das ist aber nicht ihr Verdienst, sondern nur Christi Gnade. Christus kommt den Gläubigen als gnädiger Heiland. Die Rechtfertigung und Heiligung sind ihr ewiges Gut. Und welch eine unbeschreiblich herrliche Stadt, in die sie nun eingehen! Dort wird auch jedes Werk, im Glauben an Jesum getan, aus Gnaden belohnt. Im Schlußwort der Heiligen Schrift wird uns, die wir es jetzt hören, Christi Gnade aufs neue angewünscht und zugesprochen, damit wir hoffnungsvoll erwarten den Schluß der Zeit. Lied 435, 8.

B. Jesus wird bald kommen, V. 12, 20. Er ist im Kommen begriffen. Wie, werden wir wacker sein und würdig? Siehe V. 14, „Holz des Lebens“. Ist jemand unter uns, der nach Gnade und nach jener Heimat lechzt? Siehe V. 17b, „Wasser des Lebens“. Die Gnade Christi wird umsonst, als freies Geschenk, gegeben. Des Gläubigen Name ist schon geschrieben im Buch des Lebens, V. 19b. Lauter Leben, kein Tod für uns. Dafür bürgt Christus selbst, seine Eigenschaften, seine Werke, V. 13, 16b. Wir stimmen samt der ganzen Kirche ein in das Gebet: V. 17a. Lied 433, 7. Gott gebe, daß Christi Gnade mit euch allen sei an jenem großen Tag der endlichen Erlösung!

## 2

A. Noch immer berechnen wir die Zeit nach Jahren. Wir sind am Schluß eines Kirchenjahres. Im vergangenen Kirchenjahr war die Gnade unsers Herrn Jesu Christi unter uns in vollem Schwang, denn das Zeugnis seiner Gnade war mit uns. a. Der treue Zeuge selbst ist Christus, V. 20. Seine Person, seine Eigenschaften, seine Werke bürgen für die Wahrheit seines Zeugnisses. b. Das Zeugnis ist das Wort der Schrift, das Christus zusammengefaßt hat Mark. 16, 16; Joh. 3, 18; vgl. Joh. 3, 31, 36. c. Der Überbringer des Zeugnisses ist der Engel, das ist, der Gesandte, der Prediger des Wortes Gottes. d. Die Empfänger des Zeugnisses sind die Gemeinden, V. 16a. e. Die Wirkung dieses Zeugnisses soll sein die freudige und dankbare Annahme, V. 17a; 20b. f. Schutz des Zeugnisses gegen Mißbrauch durch Hinzutun oder Hinzunahme sind die schrecklichen Drohungen, V. 18, 19.

B. Wir können also heute, am Schluß des Kirchenjahres, nicht anders als mit dankbarem Herzen anerkennen, daß die Gnade Jesu Christi bei uns war. Jesus hat durch seinen Gesandten das Zeugnis seiner Gnade verkündigen lassen und es rein und unverfälscht erhalten. Prüfe sich nun ein jeder, ob er persönlich diese Gnade geschätzt hat durch

fleißiges Hören des Zeugnisses und durch gläubige Annahme der rettend-fertigenden Gnade, die das Zeugnis ihm gebracht hat. Prüfe sich ein jeder, ob er hinzugesetzt oder abgetan hat von dem Zeugnis durch fleischliche, trotzige Abweisung dieses oder jenes Stückes die Lehre oder den Wandel betreffend. Solche Sünden sind in vielen Kirchengemeinschaften allgemein und haben im Unionismus freien Lauf. An Versuchungen, das Zeugnis zu verachten oder zu ändern, fehlt es ja nicht. Aber: 1 Petr. 1, 25. 24. Die Gnade bedeckt die Sünden des vergangenen Jahres. Die Gnade verheißt uns neue Kraft und ein gesegnetes neues Kirchenjahr, daß wir Freudigkeit haben am Tage des Gerichts. Die Gnade lehrt uns beten: „Ja, komm, Herr Jesu!“ Die Gnade schließt das Zeugnis und die ganze Heilige Schrift mit dem trostreichen, kräftigen Wort Amen.

G. H. Smulal

### Dankfagungstag

Dan. 5, 1—5. 30

Während wohl alle Bürger unsers Landes heute der Aufforderung des Präsidenten nachkommen und einen Danktag feiern, so findet man doch in der Art und Weise dieser Feier große Verschiedenheit. Die einen gebrauchen den freien Tag zur Ruhe und zur Ruhe; manche machen Reisen oder besuchen Verwandte und Freunde; viele nehmen teil an Spiel und Tanz. Viele gehen zur Kirche. Ganz allgemein aber ist die Meinung, daß zur rechten Feier des Dankfagungstages ein besonderes Festessen gehöre. Aber nicht bei allen Festmahlzeiten wird der Pflicht des Dankens gedacht. In den meisten Fällen vergißt man Gott. So war es bei Belsazers Festmahl, und wir wollen diese Geschichte uns zur Warnung gegen Undankbarkeit und Ermunterung zur Dankbarkeit dienen lassen.

#### 1

Der Text berichtet von einer Festmahlzeit, die 500 Jahre vor Christi Geburt veranstaltet wurde. Das chaldäische Reich war zur Weltmacht geworden. Belsazer führte während der Abwesenheit seines Vaters Nabonidus auf fernen Schlachtfeldern das Regiment. Eines Tages ließ er ein großes Festmahl bereiten, B. 1. Welch ein herrliches Dankfest hätte doch diese Mahlzeit sein können! Die Babylonier hatten einen Sieg nach dem andern gewonnen; sie hatten große Reichtümer erobert; Speise und Trank war in üppiger Fülle vorhanden. Doch von Dank gegen Gott für seinen Segen hören wir bei dieser Mahlzeit kein Wort. Die Dankesworte, die ausgesprochen wurden, galten den Götzen, B. 4.

Ist das nicht ein Bild der Undankbarkeit der Menschen gegen Gott? Wie wenig wird Gott für seine Wohltaten gedankt! Der liebe Gott hat uns so viel gegeben; der Same ist aufgegangen, die Saat ist gut gediehen, und die Ernte ist eingesammelt worden; Speicher und Keller

sind mit Vorrat gefüllt; Wälder liefern Holz zu Bauten; aus den Tiefen der Erde kommen Metalle und Brennstoffe. Gott hat Arbeit und Gewerbe gesegnet. Die allermeisten konnten ihr Brot verdienen. Während in andern Ländern der Krieg wüthet, ist in unserm Lande noch Friede. Wir dürfen nicht vergessen, daß aller Segen und Schutz von Gott kommt, Jak. 1, 17; Ps. 104, 27; 84, 12. Aber sowenig bei Belsazers Festmahl dem wahren Gott Dank gesagt wurde, so wenig hört man heute unter Weltmenschen die Stimme des Dankens. Man schreibt sich selber den Segen zu. Aber wir Christen wollen erkennen, daß wir dem lieben Gott für alle seine Wohlthaten Dank schuldig sind. Für alles, was wir genießen, wollen wir ihn loben und preisen.

## 2

Ein zweiter Blick auf jenes Festmahl zeigt uns ein scheußliches Bild: „Er soff sich voll mit ihnen.“ Die Gäste bei dieser Mahlzeit mißbrauchten die Gaben Gottes. Anstatt dem lieben Gott für seine Gaben zu danken, gebrauchte man sie zur Sünde und Schande. Macht es die Welt heute nicht gerade so? Wie viele Menschen empfangen doch aus Gottes Hand Nahrung und Kleidung, Wohlstand und Vermögen und leben dann mit diesen Gaben in Sünden, in Wollust und Schande. Das betrübt Gott, der die Gaben gibt. Man denke an einen Vater, der seinem Sohne Geld gibt, um nötige Ausgaben zu bestreiten, und der dann erfahren muß, daß der Sohn das Geld in einem Lasterleben vergeudet hat. Wie muß das den gütigen Vater betrüben! Und wie muß es doch Gott betrüben, wenn Menschen seine Gaben zur Sünde gebrauchen! Wer das tut, der ist in grober Weise undankbar gegen Gott, auch wenn er vielleicht mit dem Munde Worte des Dankes ausspricht.

Wir Christen wollen bedenken, daß der liebe Gott uns seine Gaben schenkt, damit wir sie zu seinem Dienst und zu unserm und unsers Nächsten Nutzen gebrauchen sollen. Das kann Gott von uns erwarten, weil wir durch das Blut seines Sohnes von der Sünde erlöst sind. Wie kann ein Mensch die e i n e Gabe Gottes, die Erlösung, im Glauben hinnehmen und dann andere Gaben Gottes für sündige Zwecke gebrauchen? Wir Christen wollen unsere Dankbarkeit für Gottes Gaben so beweisen, daß wir sie in rechter Weise gebrauchen.

## 3

Wir tun noch einen Blick auf Belsazers Festmahl. Dem betrunkenen König fällt es ein, daß er seinen schwelgenden Gästen einen besonderen Genuß bereiten kann. Die goldenen Gefäße, die aus dem Tempel in Jerusalem geraubt waren, werden hergebracht, und die Gäste tranken daraus. Das, was Gott gehörte und seinem Dienst geweiht war, wurde von Menschen zu ihren eigenen, und zwar sündlichen, Zwecken gebraucht. Das war dem Herrn ein Greuel. Es schaudert

uns, wenn wir es lesen. Aber es geschieht auch jetzt noch, daß Menschen das, was Gott gehört, nur zum eigenen Dienst gebrauchen. Indem Gott uns seine Gaben gibt, erwartet er, daß wir erkennen, daß alles ihm gehört und daß wir ihm darum aus Dankbarkeit einen Teil davon wiedergeben sollen. Wir sollen Notleidenden helfen, zur Erhaltung der Kirche Christi nach Vermögen beitragen und auch das Werk der Mission nach Kräften fördern. Wer Gottes Gaben hinnimmt und alles für sich gebraucht, der feiert eine Chaldäermahlzeit, nicht einen Danktag.

Wir Christen wollen uns heute wieder ermuntern lassen, aus Dankbarkeit gegen Gott gern und willig für Gottes Reich und für sonstige gute Zwecke zu geben.

## 4

Endlich sehen wir im Text, wie Gott über den gottlosen, undankbaren König erzürnt wird, V. 30. Undankbarkeit gegen Gott ist eine schreckliche Sünde, die Gott sicher strafen wird. Wie bald kann Gott einem undankbaren Menschen alles nehmen, sein Glück in Unglück, den Segen in einen Fluch verwandeln!

Wir Christen wollen uns fürchten vor Gottes Zorn; wir wollen Gott bitten, daß er um Christi willen unsere Undankbarkeit uns nicht zurechnen wolle; wir wollen uns vor Undankbarkeit hüten; wir wollen heute und alle Tage unserm gnädigen Gott mit Herz, Mund und Händen danken für alle die Gaben, die er uns geschenkt hat, vor allem für die Erlösung durch seinen Sohn, dann aber auch für alle seine irdischen Gaben. Lied 349, 6—8.

J. Niedner





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## Miscellanea

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### Two Types of Christian Schools

Lutheran and Roman Catholic elementary schools represent one type of Christian schools. This type is owned and operated by the congregation and therefore properly termed parochial. The elementary schools within the Christian (Dutch) Reformed Church, recommended also by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, which a few years ago separated from the main body of the Presbyterian Church under the leadership of Dr. J. Gresham Machen, represent a second type, being owned and operated by school societies. Thus the second General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church resolved in November, 1936: "that the General Assembly recommend to pastors and members of the Church the formation of *Christian School Societies* which shall have as their purpose the establishment of Christian daily schools." These schools are in all other respects like ours.

In the Christian Reformed Church the local school societies are organized in what is known as the National Union of Christian Schools, maintaining a central office at 10119 La Fayette Ave., Chicago, Ill., with Mark Fakkema as general secretary. The Secretary is personally known to the writer. He has corresponded with our office for years and once also attended our Superintendents' Conference. The National Union publishes an excellent paper, the *Home and School Magazine*, and much other fine promotional material. It was before annual conventions of this National Union that Dr. J. Gresham Machen delivered those powerful addresses known to us under the titles: "The Necessity of the Christian School" and "The Christian School, the Hope of America," both published in pamphlet form and sold for a time also by Concordia Publishing House. The local societies form regional alliances—an Eastern Alliance, a Michigan Alliance, a Chicago Alliance, and so on.

There are approximately one hundred school societies within the Christian Reformed Church, located in sixteen States. Seventeen of them do not as yet have a school. The others maintain some 80 schools, ranging in size from 20 to 747 pupils (on the whole these schools are larger than those of our Synod), many of them including junior- or senior-high-school grades. The number of teachers is 438 (159 men and 279 women), and the total enrolment amounts to 13,668 pupils. In 1930 about one half of the 263 congregations constituting this church-body had such schools at their disposal. Since then the number of schools has increased.

The underlying theory of this type of school organization is discussed by the Rev. Mark Fakkema in the *Presbyterian Guardian* of April 25, the official organ of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. "After experimenting with the church-school form of government," he says, "the Christian school movement in America" (that is, within the church-bodies named) "has adopted the school-society form of government,

not merely because history has taught us that this form makes for the most vital, virile, and healthy school-life, but also because we believe it is implied in a *Reformed world- and life-view*. Two considerations call for the school-society form of government:

"1. *The character of the Church is such that it cannot properly include the program of the school.* The Church is the visible manifestation of the spiritual body of Jesus Christ. As such it is spiritual in its character and in its program." Discussions of social and political issues, of vocational and economic problems, and of literary, musical, and art productions are not the business of the pulpit, it is argued. "Not so with the school. All that pertains to natural life has its proper place in the instruction given in the day-school. In so far as the Church (the *spiritual* body of Christ) controls and operates the day-school, the Church will either lose sight of its *spiritual* character, or it will slight the *natural* aspects of the school.

"2. *God has assigned the duty of education to parents—not to the Church or the State.* Not even in a theocracy, in which Church and State were one (as in Israel), did God place the responsibility to educate upon public officials. . . . When Moses speaks of this duty, he thus addresses the parents: 'These words . . . thou shalt teach diligently unto thy children.'

Our theory and Biblical interpretation differ. If the first of the foregoing arguments were to stand, our Church ought not to maintain its colleges and seminaries, for in them we do not only teach religion and theology but also give the students a general education. The result is not that our Synod loses sight "of its spiritual character." The general education in this case is accessory to the major aim of training pastors and teachers, and thus accessory to the chief business of the Church, the teaching and preaching of the Gospel. It is true, God has not commanded the Church to call men to teach mathematics, music, literature, languages, history, and the like, nor to maintain colleges and seminaries, even for instruction in religion and theology alone. He has commanded only that the Church teach and preach the Word, and made certain stipulations as to the character and fitness of those "who labor in the Word and doctrine." Everything that a Church does in liberty and wisdom regarding the education of its servants roots in and serves the primary purpose of the Church.

The same is true of the parochial school. The local congregation does not have the command from God to teach the common school branches, at least not as a primary duty. God has commanded the congregation only: "Preach the Gospel." "Preach the Word, in season, out of season." "Teach . . . and teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." And He certainly has forbidden all false doctrine, all untruth, all that dishonors His holy name and, therefore, also all spiritual falsehoods in a secular education. He warns that "even a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." All secular education (which is not really secular in a Christian school) is incidental or accessory to the achievement of the task which God gave the congrega-

tion. Also the Christian must learn to read, understand, and analyze a language or its construction, for he is to "search the Scriptures." Also he is to be equipped to make a living, for he is to take care of himself "and his household." Also he is to know and understand the wonders of God in nature, geography, physiology, history, and the like. The major object is to train him as an heir of eternal life and as a worthy child of God here on earth; but everything else taught in a Christian school is and should be helpful and accessory to the major aim. The congregation will, least of all, lose sight thereby of its spiritual character and main purpose.

The second point stated by Rev. Fakkema is not Biblical. God has assigned the duty of Christian education to the Church as well as to the parents (though not to the State). The very Bible text (Deut. 6: 6, 7) quoted to prove that parents alone have the duty to educate, is not addressed to parents, but to "Israel," to the Old Testament Church. The nominative of address "thou" used so much in the whole first part of this chapter does not refer to an individual, not to a parent, but to a people. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord, our God, is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, . . . and these words which I command thee . . . thou [Israel] shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." The individual is, of course, meant by implication. Parents are certainly meant so far as their home duties are concerned. But no one is here singled out. The command is given to the people as such.

The Great Commission of Christ to His Church on earth, Matt. 28: 19, 20, to "teach all nations" does not except the children. The servants of the Church are given the special command "Feed My lambs."

Our argument is not that school societies are unscriptural. In emergency cases we have had them. We have also recommended them in emergencies. Dr. C. F. W. Walther wrote in 1872, for example (*Lutheraner*, 28, p. 110): "Just now a faithful, energetic pastor of the far West reports that, when the congregation as such could not be induced to establish a parochial school and to call a teacher, he had organized a school society, whose purpose it was to work toward establishing a regular Christian week-day school. And, sure enough, the project succeeded. The society is right now in the act of calling a teacher. Certainly a worthy example to be emulated under similar conditions." But our principle and theory from the beginning has been that a Christian school should under all ordinary circumstances be a school of the congregation, since not only the parents but all members of the congregation have their duty in this respect.

We admire the wonderful spirit of earnestness and sacrifice in the societies of the National Union of Christian Schools and feel that we can learn from them in this respect; but we hold to our ideal of schools owned and operated by the churches. As Dr. A. L. Graebner put it (*Lutheraner*, 49, 1893, p. 133): "For the purpose of bringing up our youth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, we also have an association, instituted by God Himself, namely, the local Christian congregation."

A. C. STELLHORN

### The Organ and the Choir in the Lutheran Church

The Protestant churches of America have, either by agreement or consent, given to the organ a very prominent place in the services. Whereas the Puritans consistently opposed the use of musical instruments in church worship, many of the present Reformed bodies have brought the organ forward into such prominence, both architecturally and liturgically, that a discussion of the place of the organ in the Lutheran service would seem by no means superfluous, especially since an increasing number of Lutheran congregations are taking up the idea not only of giving to the organ a very conspicuous position in the church-building but also of yielding or assigning to it the most prominent part of the service.

The broaching of this matter may seem to some a needless emphasizing of trifles. It may be conceded, of course, that the matter of organ music of every kind is an *adiaphoron*. There is no commandment of God which gives to the organ either a primary or a secondary position or makes music either essential or subsidiary for divine worship. And yet it is not a matter of indifference. In many Reformed churches organ music is placed on a par with the means of grace, and more. In many service "programs" the organ music and the names of the solo singers are displayed in prominent type, while the subject of the sermon, if one is held at all, is announced with a most apologetic air, accompanied, in many cases, with the express assurance that the sermon will not occupy more than ten or, at most, fifteen minutes. It means, in effect, that the audience should not let the few words of the pastor or speaker interfere with its enjoyment of the musical numbers on the "program." There may be no harm intended if such "special music programs" are announced for a Lutheran church in place of the regular service with preaching, but there certainly is danger of harm. A Lutheran congregation will strive to bring out its doctrinal position also in its *cultus* and will avoid everything that may be misconstrued as though the Lutherans had changed their attitude toward the means of grace one whit. The Word and the Sacraments must always occupy the most prominent place before the congregation, and everything that will divert the attention of the audience from these most important parts of the service must be avoided with the greatest care.

In order, however, that this principle may be upheld in the Lutheran Church, it is necessary that the organist (and the music committee) be acquainted with the liturgical history of the Christian Church, especially since the sixteenth century. It may not be necessary to take a full and thorough course in liturgics, though such a course would by no means seem superfluous, but it would certainly be advisable to take up the history of church music from the beginning, with special reference to the liturgy. And the organist should understand that the liturgy represents not merely a form of worship but is a confession of faith. There is such a thing as catering to the spirit of the times and, incidentally, losing some of the greatest treasures of the Lutheran Church.

So far as the history of church music in the narrower sense since the Reformation is concerned, the early church orders restricted its use,

and apparently with the best of reasons. To the liturgists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was an evidence of the decay of the *chorale* that an organ was absolutely required in services. "To say the truth," says the learned but eccentric Flacius, "the strange, manifold squeaking (*Quinkelierung*) of the organ does not fit so well into the church as some people seem to think." Instead of finding rules for the introduction of organs, as we should perhaps expect, we find a number of directions which not only correct abuses of the organ as a factor in the liturgical service but actually restrict its use. According to some church orders the organ was to be used neither on Good Friday nor from the Second Sunday in Advent till Christmas nor from Laetare till Easter. The Pomeranian Agenda also included Rogation week, with the exception of Ascension Day. It was also not customary to have the organ accompany all the hymns or the entire hymns. In many instances the organ merely intoned the melody, and the congregation sang the hymns alone. This was true especially with regard to the German Creed. In addition to these restrictions the attempts at artistic playing were frowned upon. All efforts which savored of concert playing were not looked upon with favor. Motets or other strange pieces in the service proper were not permitted, the organ being strictly in the service of the congregation and its singing. The organist might give evidence of his art in the postlude. Emphasis was placed especially on one point, namely, that the preludes, interludes, and postludes, also other voluntaries, should not encroach upon the time reserved for prayers and the sermon. Above all, secular music was strictly tabu, secular songs and fantasies as well as popular melodies being under the ban.

These orders were given with good liturgical understanding, not in puritanical opposition to music as such. One principle must be maintained in the Lutheran Church, namely, that the organ should not occupy an independent position in worship. Its subsidiary character must be expressed at all times. It should serve the congregation above all in the singing of the hymns. The organist will therefore prepare himself very carefully for each service. His music must be selected with the purpose of bringing out the lesson or the character of the day. This will be apparent even in the prelude or voluntary before the beginning of worship. The hymns must be studied both as to text and music to emphasize the spirit in them. All of joy up to the veriest exultation, all the blendings of sorrow, longing, repentance, and whatever other disposition is brought out in the text must be correctly interpreted in the music. The preludes for the several *chorales* especially must agree with the character of the respective hymns. Interludes should not be longer than to afford a breathing-space for the congregation. Above all, extemporaneous playing and improvising at the organ during regular church services is inexcusable. An artist of the first rank may attempt it at a church concert, but for any one else to test the patience of the congregation in such a manner is little short of an insult. The sacredness of public worship and the exclusive emphasis which we must place upon the means of grace forbid such performances. In many hymns, interludes may be omitted entirely, a long pause being sufficient to

indicate the close of a stanza. The organist should avoid chopping two stanzas which form one sentence, or a closely knit paragraph, apart. This is evidence of great thoughtlessness on his part and seriously interferes with the devotion of the audience.

A Lutheran organist will remember, above all, that the classical choral melodies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries should always occupy first place in his *repertoire*. He will do well therefore to discuss the selection of the melodies with the pastor. To replace the glorious tunes of the "golden age" in Lutheran church music with some of the shallow, sentimental melodies of modern Gospel hymns or operas is little short of sacrilege. The grand old melodies of that age were written for the hymns, or the hymns were written for the melodies, and to divorce them means a lowering of devotional propriety. Only by a consistent combination of forces can the organist serve the edification of the congregation. The words of Kliefoth may well be mentioned here: "The organ deserves special attention in its relation to the singing of church hymns and the liturgy. The idea, indeed, as though the organ enabled the congregation to learn to sing or sing better must be dropped. . . . To educate the congregation in the ability to sing the organ is neither needed, nor is it adapted for this purpose; but it is good and appropriate for accompanying good church-singing, which is learned by singing and in no other way. And since the organ occupies this accompanying position only, it must be retained in this position. In the service of the congregation only such music has the right of existence as is in the service of the Word. The organ dare not play an independent role, without such singing. Long preludes, postludes, and interludes must be discontinued, but, above all, the insertion of self-composed fugues and other devices by which the congregation assembled for services is changed into a concert audience. When the service is over, the organist may exhibit his art and play a fugue or other composition." Lochner, in the discussion of this question, calls attention to several points: first, that a long prelude between the reading of the Gospel and the singing of the Creed is out of order, as well as are interludes during the singing of the Creed; and secondly, that the interludes between the stanzas of the Communion hymn should not be too long. This is more tiresome for the congregation than the singing of several hymns.

A question which is broached by Kliefoth as well as by Lochner is that of having the organ be silent during the liturgical singing, especially during the chanting of the pastor. The argument which has usually been advanced that the organ was to *assist* the liturgist, is one which will not hold good; for the liturgist is supposed to know the music of the liturgy thoroughly before attempting to sing it before the altar. The other reason advanced, that the solemnity of the service will be enhanced and the devotion be stimulated, has more to sustain it. The proper playing of the melody not only serves the purpose of impressiveness but also has a quieting effect upon the mind. Without encouraging mere sentimental rhapsody, it assists in devotional edification. Local circumstances must therefore decide the question as to the accompaniment of chanting by the organ. If the liturgist has a good voice for singing, the



organist will do well to accompany the chanting with soft chords. If the pastor's voice is not reliable, he should chant either without accompaniment or, better still, read the passages. The rules given by Kraussold are: "1. The organist should use soft stops only. 2. The recitative chant of the pastor should be norm for the length of the chords. 3. The chanting should never be accompanied in *continuo*, the organ being silent where there is no change in harmony. 4. The pedal must not be used during the recitative chanting of the pastor." (*Christian Art*, pp. 405-409.)

The following liturgical notes, adapted from the parish-paper of a large congregation, may have some value in directing the activity of the choir: "Since the altar symbolizes the presence of God, all, in any and every part of the church, should turn to the altar for prayer. This is true of pastor and congregation and therefore also of the choir, even if it has its place in the transept. It should always face the altar in singing or chanting."

The altar is approached from the front only by the officiating pastor, and by him only when he is performing his office during the service. At all other times, before and after the service, he approaches from the side.

The lights on the epistle side of the altar, to the right of the congregation and the left of the cross, are kindled first. The light nearest the cross is kindled first and extinguished last. The altar boy never approaches the altar at the center but always from the sides. His procedure in kindling the lights is the following. He ascends the altar step on the epistle side and from the side, kindles the candles, steps down to the side, walks about the step, bows as he passes the center, proceeds to the side, ascends from the gospel side, steps down to the side. If he wishes, he may first bow at the center and return to the center before leaving the sanctuary. He always bows when passing the center.

Surplices are worn *only during the service*. All offices before and after, kindling of lights, preparing the altar and vessels for the celebration, and the like, are performed in cassock only.

The only purpose of a processional and recessional by the choir in a Lutheran church can be to lead the messenger of God in and out. The fact that some people find a thing "nice" and "pretty" is no reason for doing it in the house of God. Everything must have a purpose and meaning. A choir is vested for the same reason which prompts a congregation to vest all who take part in the liturgy, in serving during the service. The members of the choir lead the congregation in singing and conduct the messenger and representative of God to and from the sanctuary. The choir's vestments are regulated by the principles which regulate the vestments of the officiant, the preacher, or liturgist. The purpose of the vestment is to hide the personality of the individual, all peculiarities and characteristics which might cause the person to obtrude. Cassocks should therefore be as long as possible, without interfering with the freedom of the feet while walking in a reverent and moderate manner. If we consider anything in the pastor's appearance in bad taste, this same thing is equally in poor taste in the appearance of the choir. Colored collars, white or tan or yellow shoes, cassocks of inadequate

length to cover personal peculiarities, such as white or colored trousers and the like, are not in harmony with the principles which govern vestments. Since we have vested choirs chiefly for the sake of uniformity in dress and to avoid invidious distinctions in the garments of rich and poor members, we must truly vest them. Anything in the house of God and in the worship of our Lord is worth doing well and right.

P. E. KRETZMANN

### A "Great Gulf" Indeed, But What Is It?

How easy it is to be misled and to mislead! Writing in *Christendom* (an interdenominational quarterly, edited by H. P. Douglass) for the summer, 1940, issue, Prof. Eduard Heimann of New York, member of the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research, tries to show where the difference between Lutheran and Reformed views in reference to the State lies. His article has the striking caption "The Great Gulf." It is further characterized by the subheading "A Study of the Cleavage between Germany and the West." The article does not deal with politics but with religion. In the author's opinion the Lutheran Church, in as far as it presents any teachings concerning the State, merely inculcates the position that the Christian has to obey the government regardless of what the latter may command or demand. He says that this position is taught "to the total eclipse of the other doctrine (which balances it in the later Protestant churches through the influence of Calvin), that one has to obey God rather than man." He thinks that the doctrine of human sinfulness, on which Luther placed tremendous emphasis, is responsible for what he alleges to be the Lutheran view of the Christian's attitude toward the State. Since we are sinful and by nature can do nothing save what is evil, God has instituted the government to keep the world from perishing in strife and disorder, and our duty is simply to obey. That Luther insisted on complete loyalty to the powers that be, he says, is confirmed by what he calls Luther's furious condemnation of the insurgent peasants.

Lutherans must protest against such a presentation of their position as a caricature. An unbiased study of the position of Luther and his followers will lead to conclusions different from those that Professor Heimann arrived at. Let us here merely draw attention to the statement in a document whose authority, when the Lutheran position is to be ascertained, no one can impugn, the Augsburg Confession. In Article 16 it says: "Meanwhile it [the Gospel] does not destroy the state or the family, but very much requires that they be preserved as ordinances of God and that charity be practiced in such ordinances. Therefore Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin; for then they ought to obey God rather than men, Acts 5:29." The very thing which the author says disappears in the Lutheran position is here affirmed with absolute clarity—that obedience to God must always take precedence wherever there is a clash between divine and human authorities.

There is indeed a deep gulf separating Reformed and Lutheran conceptions as to the function of the Church with respect to the State.

According to Reformed theology the Church must endeavor to make the State a righteous organization, an instrument for assisting the Church in spreading and defending revealed truth and making people live according to the precepts of Scripture; it must induce the State to pass legislation which will promote true morality; it must use this organization to fight social evils, such as gambling and drunkenness; it must as a body oppose the waging of wars and make the various States adopt the Golden Rule as their principle of action; it must, again as an organization, work for the adoption of social-welfare legislation, like old-age pensions, the medical examination of all pupils in public and private schools, and the establishment of playgrounds and parks. In other words, according to Reformed theology the Church must consider itself, and actually be, a direct social factor, or agent, in making this world a better place to live in. According to Lutheran theology, on the other hand, the Church has one function, to preach the Word, the Law and the Gospel; it must tell its members how to live, but it has no duty to regulate the lives of those outside its folds; it has no duty toward the State except to make its members good, law-abiding citizens. Accordingly the Lutheran Church opposes the view that the Church has the right to meddle in the affairs of the State, to use the arm of the government to make the members of the community follow the principles of morality taught by the Church, to bring about the enactment of laws which will compel the citizens outwardly to conform to what the Church considers just and right in human relations. In Article 28 of the Augsburg Confession the Lutheran Church declares: "Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the commonwealth. As Christ says, John 18:36: 'My kingdom is not of this world'; also Luke 12:14: 'Who made Me a Judge or a Divider over you?' Paul also says, Phil. 3:20: 'Our citizenship is in heaven'; 2 Cor. 10:4: 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations.'" This is true Lutheranism; and at the same time, we submit, it is true Americanism. In unmistakable terms it voices the principle of separation of Church and State.

It does not follow that in Lutheran countries there is notoriously bad government. The testimony of travelers and observers avers the very opposite. The Lutheran Church has much to say to its members as to what they owe the State, whether they hold office or not, what sort of magistrates God expects them to be, what sort of voters. Its influence on the State is exerted indirectly through the kindling of love toward God and man in the hearts of those that have come to believe in Jesus as their Savior.

That with Lutherans the principle that God must be obeyed rather than men was put into practice can be shown from history. When

Luther in 1522 returned from the Wartburg, it was in opposition to the wish of his government. When Paul Gerhardt, prince of Lutheran hymn-writers, was ordered by his government to cease opposing Reformed errors, he rather suffered removal from his position as a preacher in Berlin than to obey. When the lamentable union of the Lutheran and Reformed churches was proclaimed in Prussia in 1817, many Lutherans protested and rather endured persecution than that they should become disobedient to God.

That the particular conviction of Luther's which was responsible for his emphasis on obedience to the government was his deep realization of the sinfulness of the human race and of the individual, is only partly true. The driving force in the life of Luther was the joyous assurance that God has forgiven our sins for the sake of Christ, our blessed Redeemer. To possess this forgiveness Luther considered the greatest treasure, beside which everything else that is prized and esteemed pales into insignificance. That a person should be assured of God's favor was to Luther a far more important matter than to live in surroundings that were morally commendable. One's relation to God is that which must be given first place, he held; where that relation is of the right kind, proper actions will follow. What gave direction to Luther's course was the conviction that the Christian religion first of all is something inward, an attitude of the heart, having at its center faith in Jesus Christ.

One regrets to see that Dr. Heimann, like hundreds of other writers, misunderstands Luther's position in the Peasants' War. To what extent and how warmly Luther championed the cause of the oppressed peasants is overlooked or ignored, and when his vehement criticism of their course is quoted, frequently no mention is made of the ghastly bloodthirstiness and unspeakable cruelty that marked their progress—features which made stern measures unavoidable.

Thus the existence of a great gulf between the Reformed and the Lutheran conception of the Church's attitude toward the State is admitted, but Professor Heimann's view of the nature of this gulf is far from correct.

When the above paragraphs were to be sent to the printer, the fall 1940 issue of *Christendom* came to hand. It contains six critical evaluations of Dr. Heimann's article, among which that of President A. R. Wentz of Gettysburg Theological Seminary is particularly incisive and illuminating, drawing attention to some of the flagrant misrepresentations of the New York professor.

W. ARNDT



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Theological Observer — Kirchl. Zeitgeschichtliches

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**Is Lutheran Opposition to Unionism Unchristian and Resting on Human "Rationalization"?** — The editor of the *Christian Century* writes at length on "Southern Baptist Isolationism," which, naturally, he condemns. He finds himself in accord with the *Biblical Recorder*, the organ of the Baptists of North Carolina, which likewise deplors "the isolationist behavior" of Southern Baptists. The editor of the *Christian Century* says about Southern Baptists: "Their reputation for self-sufficiency does not derive alone from their refusal to cooperate in large general enterprises like the Federal Council of Churches; it extends down to the local community. Here they impress their brethren as being a formidable obstacle to the broader fellowship which is striving to come to realization throughout the whole Protestant world." Making comparisons, the editor continues: "It is true that their neighbor denomination, the Southern Presbyterian, rests under similar criticism in respect to the more general forms of cooperation, but its membership is only one tenth the size of the Southern Baptists and its non-cooperation does not extend so consistently to the local community. It is also true that the Episcopalians and one strong Lutheran body are conspicuously non-cooperative; but they, too, are less numerous than Southern Baptists, and, besides, they do shield their unchristian aloofness behind a rationalization which quiets their conscience with respect to their unfraternal behavior toward the growing movement for fellowship and cooperation."

It is the last sentence quoted to which we should like to draw attention in particular. "Unchristian aloofness"! The Lutheran body charged with this attitude evidently is the Synodical Conference. Its earnest endeavors to avoid giving aid to, or countenancing, false doctrine is termed "unchristian aloofness." And when it quotes Bible-passages showing that its refusal to join hands with errorists is based on the Scriptures, this exposition and defense of its course is by the *Christian Century* called a rationalization. The term need not frighten us. It sounds formidable, but the charge it implies is not true. What it suggests is that Lutherans first adopt aloofness and then try to find arguments for it in the Scriptures or elsewhere. It is the other way around. We find the Scriptures warning us against toying with error and directing us to avoid false teachers, and studying these warnings we see that the course of aloofness is the only one compatible with the Scriptures. No one can read the Bible without being impressed with its tremendous earnestness when it is speaking of clinging to the truth and avoiding error. There is not one sentence in it that sanctions doctrinal indifference. To heed this position of the Scriptures and to draw the practical conclusion is not a rationalization of the position of aloofness but is simply faithfulness to God's Word.

A.

**A Billion Copies of Luther's Small Catechism.** — Prof. A. C. Streng of Texas Lutheran College, Seguin, Tex., junior college of the American Lutheran Church, is endeavoring to secure a "fair estimated figure of the approximate number of copies which have been published of Luther's

Small Catechism since 1529." He writes in a letter to the undersigned: "Frequently one reads of estimates of the large number of copies which have been printed of several other books, but in such compilations Luther's Small Catechism is never mentioned. Just recently a writer in a widely used History of Education wrote that the *New England Primer* had been printed in no less than three million copies and intimated that there was probably no other schoolbook that had been so widely used in America." We pass on the problem to such pastors, teachers, and professors as may help Dr. Streng, who can be reached under the address given above, in solving it. Dr. Streng writes: "I hope you will not consider this effort a waste of time. You know better than I that it is a real rarity that one little book should retain its value and well-deserved popularity for more than four centuries." We agree with the writer's statement and hope that the Lutheran Church will never tire of its great "Laymen's Bible." In the interest of the venture we quote Professor Streng's approach to the solution of the problem. He writes: "It would be conservative to estimate that each Lutheran had at least one copy of the Catechism. It appears as though it would also be fair to estimate that there have been about four generations of Catechism-users to the century. The average number of Lutherans per century has been estimated as follows: 16th century, 10,000,000; 17th, 20,000,000; 18th, 30,000,000; 19th, 50,000,000; 20th, 80,000,000. The number, then, would be: 16th century, 10,000,000 times 4 = 40,000,000; 17th century, 20,000,000 times 4 = 80,000,000; 18th, 30,000,000 times 4 = 120,000,000; 19th, 50,000,000 times 4 = 200,000,000; 20th, 80,000,000 times 1.5 = 120,000,000. Total: 560,000,000. It should not be forgotten that there have been a large number of 'explanations' of Luther's Small Catechism, and at least one 'explanation,' on the average, has come into the hands of the average Lutheran. Very frequently the Catechism has also been reprinted in various 'Graded Lessons' of various church-bodies and in a goodly number of other publications. Would it therefore be fair and safe to estimate that there have been printed at least a billion copies of Luther's Small Catechism since the days of Dr. Martin Luther? Or would figures derived at in some other way give us a fairer estimate?" To us it appears as if the estimate were fair enough; what do our readers think? But if Luther's Catechism has been sold in a billion copies, how does it rank among the best sellers outside the Bible? The question certainly is one of sufficient importance for further investigation.

J. T. M.

**The Question of Infant Baptism.**—The *Christian Beacon* (July 4, 1940), in view of the all too general neglect of pedobaptism today, publishes a sermon on infant baptism preached years ago by Rev. I. S. McElroy, Richmond, Va., but now long out of print. The sermon possesses many points of value and argues the necessity of infant baptism on the following grounds: 1. Children are church-members and therefore should be baptized. 2. The apostles habitually practiced household or family (infant) baptism. 3. Christ commands household or family (infant) baptism. 4. The Church of God has always believed and practiced household or family (infant) baptism. There is perhaps little fault to be found with the three last arguments, which also we Lutherans use when stressing



the necessity of infant baptism. But the first argument of Dr. McElroy has no value at all, since it is based upon false premises and therefore is fundamentally false. The Presbyterian minister reasons thus: The children of church-members were members of the Church under the Old Testament. The Church under the Old Testament is identical with the Church under the New Testament. Therefore the children of church-members are members of the Church under the New Testament, and it is therefore the "solemn duty and sweet privilege of every member of the Church to have his or her children baptized." One half of the sermon is devoted to this argument, which, however, Baptists and other opponents of pedobaptism might use against his process of reasoning; for they might say: "If children already are members of the Church, why should they be baptized? Public Baptism has the nature of a *confession of faith*, and this should be made when the individual is grown up and fully instructed in the faith." To this the orthodox Presbyterian will reply: "No, indeed; Baptism is the outward sign of the inward state of grace and thus of the actually existing state of church-membership, so that it must not be omitted by any means." What we wish to point out is that no one can really argue the intrinsic necessity of infant baptism who does not accept the Scripture doctrine of the function and efficacy of the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments, though he may say, of course, that infants are to be baptized since Christ commanded this and the apostles as well as the early Christian Church invariably practiced it. A comparison of the Lutheran argumentation for infant baptism with that of the Presbyterian minister will show how essentially different the Lutheran doctrine is from the Reformed view. Lutheran theologians demonstrate the intrinsic necessity of infant baptism thus: (a) Baptism is an efficacious means of grace, the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, Tit. 3:5; John 3:5, 6. (b) Infants are in need of regeneration, since they are flesh born of flesh, John 3:5, 6. (c) Christ expressly commands that infants should be brought to Him, Mark 10:13-15. (d) Infants can believe, so that by faith they can apprehend the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation offered and conveyed to them in Holy Baptism, Matt. 18:6. This simple argumentation is Scriptural and unanswerable, especially in view of Christ's command in Matt. 28:19 and the consistent practice of the apostles and the early Christian Church, Acts 16:15; 16:33. Today, when Fundamentalism is again coming into strength, the question of infant baptism is being given much consideration in church-papers; we therefore have all the more reason to make clear to our parishioners the Scripturalness of the Lutheran doctrine of infant baptism.

J. T. M.

**Auburn Affirmationists Rule Presbyterian General Assembly.**—The *Sunday-school Times*, in its issue of July 13, 1940, carried the following story concerning the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., which met in Rochester, N. Y., in May: "The General Assembly of the [Northern] Presbyterian Church at Rochester elected as moderator for next year a signer of the Auburn Affirmation, an 'affirmation' which makes optional for Presbyterian ministers belief in the inerrancy of Scripture, the virgin birth of Christ, the substitu-



tionary atonement, the bodily resurrection of Christ, and the supernatural character of Christ's miracles. An affirmation which reaffirmed these essential doctrines of the Christian faith was presented in an overture from the Arkansas Presbytery but was voted down *unanimously*. It was a glorious day for *Modernism*. Dr. H. McAllister Griffiths, in reporting the Assembly meetings for the *Christian Beacon*, said: 'They jubilated openly that at last a signer [of the Auburn Affirmation] had become moderator. When they produced the 'Affirmation' in 1923-1924, they were a minority in danger of expulsion. Today they sit in the seats of the mighty. They first pleaded for toleration [for themselves], divided evangelicals by every art known to ecclesiastical politics, won battle after battle on the representation that the 'issue is not doctrinal' and, after achieving mastery, denied toleration to those from whom they had gained it for themselves, and forced them out of the Church. They deprecated controversy as all 'fifth columns' do until they are ready to take over. Today the Church, which still contains hundreds of thousands of true, God-fearing, Christ-loving people, is in the iron grip of its modernist 'fifth column.' Dr. J. B. C. Mackie of Philadelphia is reported as having told Dr. Griffiths that the Affirmationists are now running the Church. 'We had a long fight; our horns were locked hard with you fellows for a long while,' Dr. Mackie said. The conservatives with their 'fight from within' program did not so much as lift a voice. Even when the vote came for the unanimous election of the Moderator, not one single 'fight from within' voice was heard.'

This report is confirmed by an article in the *Christian Beacon* (Aug. 1, 1940), entitled 'The Auburn Affirmation Bears Fruit.' It is written by Dr. W. C. Robinson, professor of theology at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Ga., and convincingly proves how thoroughly the Modernists control the Northern Presbyterian Church, after they have put to silence all conservative elements. It is a pitiful story indeed of violent oppression of the Christian truth by faithless schemers without principle and without conscience.

J. T. M.

**Do the Scriptures Vary in Importance?**—In view of the current liberal view that there are in Scripture parts of primary, secondary, and tertiary importance, it may be interesting to consider the simple, but correct reply which the *Sunday-school Times* (Aug. 3, 1940) gives in answer to the question. Liberal theology, of course, makes this distinction to discard as uninspired whole portions of Scripture; while the *Sunday-school Times*, though indeed acknowledging a difference, upholds the "inspiration, divinity, and eternal importance" of *all* Scripture. We read: "The question would seem to be a proper one. And most true, reverent students of the Bible would doubtless agree that not all of the books of the Bible are of equal importance if the question refers to what matters are of the greatest importance to mankind. But it is imperative to remember, as we recognize this, that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine [teaching], for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good

works' 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. This central passage on the inspiration of the Bible declares that every book of the Bible and *every word* [Italics ours] of the Bible is 'God-breathed' (the literal meaning of 'given by inspiration of God'); and that every part of the Bible is divinely important and divinely useful to us for our teaching, for the reproving and correcting of our mistakes and sins, for our instruction in righteous life and living; and, therefore, that if God's people would be mature, complete, in their spiritual life and every-day living and would be completely equipped for good works and for living as God would have them live, *they need to read and to use the entire Bible*. This central passage on the inspiration of the Bible is also immediately preceded by the inspired declaration that 'the Holy Scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' To be made wise unto salvation through faith in Christ as Savior is the supremely important matter for every man, woman, and child in the world; for 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God' and 'the wages of sin is death,' both the first death, of the body, and the second death, of the spirit. Rom. 3:23; 6:23. Therefore those books or passages of the Bible which show lost men how to be saved—and there are many such passages—are of the greatest importance. But after being saved [i. e., brought to salvation], we need to know how to live, how to honor and glorify God, how to lead others to Christ, how to recognize sin and be delivered from sinning, how to be completely furnished for the life-long business of living; and for all this the whole Bible is needed. Therefore the whole Bible is of inspired, divine, and eternal importance." The distinction here made is thus one of our *need* and not one of any "degrees in inspiration" as liberal theology in Lutheran circles has falsely declared. The distinction is similar to the one which our Lutheran theologians have made between fundamental and non-fundamental articles of faith.

J. T. M.

**Concerning the Work of the Episcopalians among the Colored People.** In the *Living Church* an Episcopalian bishop discusses briefly plans which are considered in Episcopalian circles to create a colored missionary district in our country. It is Bishop Barnwell of Georgia, who writes as follows:

"It was not proposed by the provincial commission on Negro work to 'form all Negro congregations in the province into a missionary district.' It was proposed that we form a 'missionary district to consist of the Negro work in such dioceses as shall by request of their bishops and diocesan conventions ask to have their Negro work included in such missionary district.' We also asked that a Negro bishop be elected for this missionary district when it is created.

"The provincial commission does not contemplate, nor does it desire, that more than four or five Southern dioceses do so consent. We should like to see about half of our Negro work developed under the plan of the missionary episcopate and about half remain under the administration of white dioceses, as in the past. We should then be able to see—about twenty years from now—whether or not there is any virtue in the racial-episcopate plan which has been considered for years." A.

**Walter Rauschenbusch and the Social Gospel.** — Under the heading "Walter Rauschenbusch — a Great Good Man" the *Religious Digest* publishes excerpts from an article which first appeared in the *Colgate-Rochester Divinity School Bulletin* on this late leader of social gospelism. Of special value is the "summary of belief" at the end of the article, showing that Rauschenbusch believed (1) that the kingdom of God on earth constituted the core of Jesus' message — that this kingdom would be realized by good people leagued in a society of goodness; (2) that the Church is the chief agency for building this divine society upon earth and that it must fulfil this mission or perish; (3) that nothing that concerns the life of man is outside the will of God and that religion, to be effective, must penetrate and Christianize every phase of individual and collective life; (4) that if the Church would seriously undertake the task of establishing on earth the kingdom of God, it would become the spiritual organ of a new world order; (5) that, when Jesus prayed, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," He was not uttering idle words but outlining a program for His disciples." To this "summary" the writer adds under the title "The Heart of the Gospel": "Man is more valuable than profits, creeds, denominations, or the world itself. Creeds, doctrines, and institutions are good only as they serve life. Moreover, every life is valuable. We must have compassion on people regardless of race, class, or condition. Every citizen of the Kingdom must oppose every evil that seeks to destroy human life. Where does that put us with reference to the liquor traffic, greed, injustice of every sort, unemployment, war? Rauschenbusch held that, wherever the economic system dehumanizes man, it, too, is evil; that, while the Christian ideal pretty largely dominates the home and public education, the economic, the industrial, and the international orders are far from the Kingdom."

The reason why we here quote this "summary," is not only that it presents a clear and concise picture of the social gospel for which Rauschenbusch stood and for which today Modernists still stand, but also that, misunderstanding the essence and aim of social gospelism, believing Christian circles today are turning to it with an emphasis that we cannot help regarding as misplaced. As the "summary" shows, Rauschenbusch adopted into his religious system not an iota of the doctrinal content of true Christianity. His "Christianity" was entirely social, or earthly, the fostering of the *iustitia civilis* with all its temporal benefits. As Ritschl, the father of social gospelism, so also Rauschenbusch did not acknowledge sin in its actual condemnability, nor Christ's atonement as the sinner's only way of salvation from sin. But just these two, sin and grace, or, to use the Savior's words, "repentance and remission of sins, should be preached in His name among all nations" (Luke 24:47); just that is the business of the Christian Church as such. The Christian Church is, of course, interested also in the social welfare of the world, but this follows as a necessary result of the preaching of the Law and the Gospel. By the spiritual Gospel, which it proclaims, the Church becomes a leaven for good, "a light of the world and a salt of the earth." Believing Christians at times may have somewhat left out of view their social obligations, but not because they stressed their primary duty of preach-

ing repentance and remission of sins too much. The reverse rather is true: had the Church been more faithful in the proclamation of repentance and remission of sins, its charitable, or social, activity would have been greater also. Believing Christians who today demand greater emphasis on the social work of the Church should remember the final commission of their Lord, Mark 16:15 and Matt. 28:19, as the first thing that must come first. In the Pauline epistles the relation between Christian teaching and Christian holy and helpful living is clearly pointed out, and what we confessing Christians of today should strive at is not a quasi-imitation of Rauschenbusch but the faithful following in the footsteps of the great apostle who through the ceaseless preaching of the spiritual Gospel did more for the society of his time than all social gospelists have done for the time in which they lived and proclaimed their social gospel falsely so called, which benefited men neither spiritually nor temporally; for in every way the social gospel as advocated by Rauschenbusch, Kagawa, Fosdick, Bishop McConnell, and hosts of other Modernists has proved itself a dismal failure. J. T. M.

**Einstein's Failure to Explain the World through a Unifying Theory.**—Facile behaviorists who believe they can reduce social relationships to a formula may learn some wisdom from the latest declaration of Professor Einstein concerning the physical universe. For years, Mr. Einstein's consuming ambition has been to find an all-comprehensive physical theory into which the entire world of material phenomena could be fitted. He maintains that he has accomplished this for the world of heavenly bodies including the earth, through his theory of relativity, or "field theory." But the field theory breaks down completely when it comes to dealing with the atomic world. The atoms refuse to fit into any predetermined system of cause and effect and are governed by the "inexorable" law of indeterminacy or the "quantum theory." The reconciliation of the field theory and the quantum theory would solve the riddle. But after years of the most passionate effort Einstein finds himself further from the goal than ever. Furthermore, Einstein sees no hope that such an all-embracing theory can ever be attained. In other words, he admits the existence of a mystery beyond the power of the human mind to solve. If this be the physicist's admission concerning the world which he can see and handle, why scoff at the existence of mysteries in the world beyond the reach of any human measurement?

#### America

**Luther Academy.**—For the fourth consecutive year the Luther Academy met at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, from July 16 to July 24. This academy is patterned after the *Luther-Akademie* in Sondershausen, Germany, in that it serves as a forum for the leading men of all sections of the Lutheran Church and gives an opportunity for the formation of better mutual acquaintance.

The subjects discussed at this year's meeting of the Academy included the following: "The Second Chapter of James," by Dr. Julius Bodensieck, president-elect of Wartburg Seminary; "The Ancient Hebrews," by Dr. H. Lutz, professor of Assyriology in the University of California; "The Lord's Supper," by Dr. M. Reu of Wartburg Seminary; "Church

Architecture," by Dr. Luther Reed, president of the Mount Airy Seminary; "The New World View," by Dr. Ad. Pilger of Fond du Lac, Wis.; "The Effectiveness of the Sermon," by Prof. E. J. Friedrich of Wheat Ridge, Colo.; "The Kingdom of God," by Dr. M. Reu; "Berthold of Regensburg," by Prof. S. F. Salzmann; and "Papacy and World Dominion," by Dr. C. B. Gohdes of Columbus, O.

A total of 141 pastors from five different synods of the Lutheran Church attended the academy of 1940.

M. SCHARLEMANN

**A Practical Description of "New Thought."**—No doubt there are times when pastors are asked to give inquiring church-members a concise and practical description of what "New Thought" is. Perhaps the following witty, yet apposite description, offered by the *Christian Beacon* (July 25, 1940), may be of help to them. "New Thought is a hybrid between a personality show and a healing cult. Perhaps it would be well to consider what Old Thought is first. Old Thought is any form of authority, be it physician or Church. Calvinism and other forms of orthodoxy which lay emphasis upon man's sin, the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and punishment are all Old Thought. New Thought is opposed to such antiquated creeds and rituals. Originally springing from the same source as Christian Science, it first became a full-fledged religious sect about 1890 under a Bostonian by the name of Holcomb. The doctrine of New Thought is quite appealing to man. 'Man is made in the image of God, and evil and pain are but tests and corrections that appear when his thoughts do not reflect the full glory of the image. Man is God incarnate. There is no such thing as sin.' (See Rom. 3:23.) Troubles and afflictions, pain, disease, and death are only illusions. (See Ezek. 18:4.) All that we need is to realize our glorious deity and that we are actually God, and all will be well. Not only will health be restored and troubles be gone, but riches and wealth will roll in upon us. New Thought bears a close affinity to nineteenth-century Unitarianism, and one can detect a very real similarity between it and Modernism. 'Man's fall was upward. The chief aim of man is the development of his own personality.' New Thought has the peculiar virtue, however, of offering a definite solution to the problem. For best results one should get a 'beautiful thought and then begin to breathe deeply through the nose and exhale through the mouth, thereby exercising the solar plexus and increasing the blood flow.' The causes of all disease and disorder are bad mental words and pictures. The cure results in the displacing of the bad with good mental pictures. Consequently, New Thought subscribes to what it calls the 'silent message.' It has six steps: first, return every day to a quiet room alone for one half hour at least; second, take a restful position, relax your physical body, breathe freely and deeply for a few minutes; third, relax your mind, shut out all sensations; fourth, when calm and peaceful, concentrate on some affirmation such as the following: 'I am an expression of divine life, and in vitality, body, and affairs I show forth the limitless love, power, and wisdom of my Father'; fifth, let the affirmation fill you until rest and peace steal over you (until you go to sleep, in plain English); sixth, do this every day. There is also the solar-plexus method of rubbing one's stomach and keeping the mind filled with beautiful thoughts. Stephen

Leacock, in his book *Essays and Literary Studies*, makes the following observations: 'Here is a creed of self-development. It arrogates to itself the title of New Thought, but contains in reality nothing but the old selfishness. According to this particular outlook, the goal of morality is found in fully developing oneself. *Be large*, says the votary of this creed, *be high, be broad!* He gives a shilling to a starving man not that the man may be fed but that he himself may be a shilling-giver. The whole of his virtue and his creed of conduct runs to a cheap and easy egomania in which his blind passion for himself causes him to use external people and things as mere reactions upon his own personality. In its more ecstatic form this creed expresses itself in a sort of general feeling of uplift or the desire for internal moral expansion. The votary is haunted by the idea of his own elevation. He wants to get in touch with nature, to swim in the greater Being, to tune himself, to harmonize himself, and generally to perform on himself as on a sort of moral accordion. He gets himself somehow mixed up with natural objects — with the sadness of autumn he falls with the leaves and drips with the dew. Yet, odd though this may seem, this creed of self-development struts about with its head high as one of the chief moral factors which have replaced the authoritative dogma of the older King.'

The fundamental idea of New Thought is the pantheistic tenet that thought is superior to matter and that, if one has the will to conquer, he may overcome all hindrances to health and happiness. All objections against Christian Science hold with equal force also against its sister delusion, called New Thought.

J. T. M.

**Who Reads the Papers?**—In reply to this question the *Lutheran* (May 8) writes: "Not as many people as we would like," and then comments: "News-stands are loaded with periodicals of bewildering variety, which are bought in vast quantity. In competition with them our serious and sober church-papers have a hard battle. Six well-known Methodist weekly papers, according to Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, had a circulation in 1922 of 250,311. In 1939 the circulation total was 220,727. The same story can be told in most church circles. The *Churchman*, much-respected periodical in the Protestant Episcopal Church, is asking whether all church journalism must be keyed down to the level of the 'gum-chewers' tabloids.' Will it be necessary to put all the news in pictures to save people the trouble of reading? And must discussions of all serious subjects be dropped to save readers from the pain of thinking? Here are some late figures on circulation of representative periodicals. They are worth thinking about. *Lutheran*, 20,100; *Watchman-Examiner* (Baptist), 11,192; *Christian Advocate*, New York (Methodist), 55,351; *Presbyterian*, 10,500; *Living Church* (Episcopal), 7,645; *America* (Roman Catholic), 27,240; *Commonweal* (Roman Catholic), 15,000; *Christian Century*, 29,911; *Christian Herald*, 252,881; *True Story Magazine*, 2,005,139." The list certainly is interesting. In general, conservative Christian periodicals in an orthodox denomination have more readers than liberal periodicals. At any rate, considering that our *Lutheran Witness* has more than 90,000, our *Lutheraner* close to 25,000, and our *Walther League Messenger* about 60,000 subscribers, the editors



of our church-papers have much to be thankful for, thanks largely to the care of many conscientious pastors and laymen who make it their business to promote the reading of their church periodicals in their congregations. Ultimately the one to lose by the loss of subscribers to the church-papers is the Church; for church-members badly informed on matters pertaining to their Church will find it hard to remain interested church-workers. We quote the list from the *Lutheran* for possible use and comparison by our pastors. J. T. M.

**Future Presbyterian Ministers.**—Dr. Carl McIntire, editor of the *Christian Beacon*, witnessed among others the licensure of Mr. Salvatore C. Schangler, recent candidate of Princeton Seminary, as also the reception, under the care of the Brooklyn-Nassau Presbytery, of Mr. Wm. M. Lovell, second-year man in Union Seminary, N. Y., and graduate of Yale. Reporting editorially on the experience, Dr. McIntire says (*Christian Beacon*, June 27):

"Mr. Schangler came highly recommended by the Presbytery's committee and was asked to read his statement of belief to the Presbytery. In his statement concerning the Bible he took the Barthian position represented by the recent professor in Princeton Dr. Brunner, though he did not tell the Presbytery that it was the nucleus of the Barthian position. Nevertheless, when his statement was read, there apparently was some question in the minds of presbyters, for they asked him questions concerning it. He said: 'The Bible contains the Word of God, and it has in it a revelation of God which is unique as to the goodness and the mercy of God. Besides the revelation of God the Bible has also human records, some of which historical records are not necessarily unique.' Here the distinction between the revelation which the Bible contains and the historical material which the Bible contains, which is the very *crux* of Barthianism, was brought before the Presbytery. Nevertheless he said that the historical sections were authentic. The young man's own pastor, Dr. Armes of the Bedford Presbyterian Church, speaking for the young man, attempted to explain the difference by telling the presbyters that they could all understand that in seminary when the students dealt with different dialectics, he would like to draw these lines. Dr. Armes is known as a premillenarian and Fundamentalist, and when one of his promising young men went to Princeton, it was necessary for him in the Presbytery of Brooklyn-Nassau to help the young man on this very vital issue. There is a great gap between saying that the revelation sections of the Bible and the historical sections of the Bible vary in their uniqueness. There is a great gap between saying that the Bible contains the Word of God and that the Bible is the Word of God. *Yield on the point that the Bible is the Word of God, and the citadel of Protestantism is lost.*" (Italics our own.)

"The young man from Yale had read in his behalf a letter from one of his professors in Union Seminary which said, 'Few students we can recommend so unqualifiedly.' In his first statement as to why he was going into the ministry he did not mention the name of Jesus Christ. He said that in his first year at Yale he saw the social need and that there was no institution more fitted to meet the need of the day than



the Church. When asked directly, 'What does Jesus Christ mean to you?' he said, 'He stands as a driving motive.' When asked, 'What is your conception of the ministry?' he said it was one of the most difficult positions to hold today because a minister had to be well read in psychology, sociology, human relations, literature. He said he was interested in working among laboring groups. Coming under the care of the Presbytery, the young man was to be examined as to his own religious experience. He never once said that he was saved or that he personally trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior. These matters were not brought out by the Presbytery. He was highly praised and commended for his prospects as a brilliant young candidate, and received apparently on the basis of his character."

Dr. McIntire's sane comment on this happening is contained in the title prefixed to the editorial, "Future Ministers." Pity the Church having such ministers to feed Christ's flock! J. T. M.

**Brief Items.**—Several months ago Prof. Olaf Elias Brandt of the Norwegian Lutheran Church passed away. He was a graduate of Concordia Seminary, belonging to the class of 1883, and in 1915 had received the honorary D.D. from Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis. He had been professor at Luther Seminary since 1897. From 1897—1902 he was the associate editor of *Kirketidende*. When in 1917 the merger of Norwegian synods was formed, he cast his lot with the majority.

May, this year, is a busy month in Rome, to be marked by all the impressive ceremonies customary when holy souls are officially elevated to the altars of the Church. On May 2 Blessed Gemma Galgani and Blessed Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier will be solemnly canonized. Later in the month several beatification ceremonies will take place, among them being those of the Venerable Rose Philippine Duchesne and the Venerable Joaquina de Vedruna de Mas.—So wrote *America*. The old game continues.

That Calvinism has not vanished entirely is apparent from an article in the *Presbyterian* having the heading: "The War and Contemporary Theology." The writer says: "The reassertion of original sin as an incontrovertible fact leads directly into the reassertion of irresistible grace, and the problem posed by the first doctrine finds its solution in the second. Incapable of effective righteousness without the help of God, without aid from what the Barthians call 'beyond,' we find that help in a power which takes hold of our lives both for instruction and command. As for its irresistibility, man's lower estimate of self always brings with it a higher estimate of God." The teaching of irresistible grace was one of the earmarks of the old Calvinism. Here we have an outcropping of the rationalism (combated in Dr. Engelder's present series) which makes conclusions and draws inferences running counter to clear statements of the Scriptures.

The attention of all of our pastors and teachers is herewith drawn to the educational number of the *Northwestern Lutheran* (Wisconsin Synod), which effectively brings the case of our Christian day-schools and of Lutheran schools and colleges before its readers. Whoever is

looking for a good tract pertaining to this important matter might simply order this particular issue of the paper mentioned (Vol. 27, No. 16).

Writing about this year's Assembly of Northern Presbyterians, an elder who attended the meetings as a delegate writes in the *Presbyterian* of July 4: "One thing I learned is that it is a preacher's convention. The average elder, like myself, does not have a chance to be informed upon many of the overtures and propositions, while the minister, working at church government and instructing his congregation 365 days in the year, is properly organized and is able to guide the destinies of the Church, while we humble elders vote 'Yes' and 'No' without a full comprehension or thorough understanding of the issues. There were overtures and propositions which had dynamite in them, and at this time, in the chaotic state of civilization, if adopted and practiced by a majority of the church-membership, might change the whole course of religion. We, as commissioners, were handed the printed dockets and printed reports on these various questions, which were so voluminous that it would take weeks and months to digest them properly." Many Lutheran laymen who have served as delegates voice similar sentiments. The question arises whether our synodical conventions are always as fully aware of the needs, handicaps, and predicaments of the laymen as they should be.

The *Lutheran* of July 24 reports that, when the Church Architectural Guild held its organizational meeting in New York City the latter part of June and thirty-seven representative architects were enrolled as charter members, "two Lutheran clergymen were also elected honorary members in recognition of 'distinguished service to the cause of church architecture.' These non-professional members are the Rev. Dr. Luther D. Reed of the Philadelphia seminary and the Rev. F. R. Webber, whose books on *Church Symbolism* and *The Small Church* are recognized as authoritative by ministers and architects alike." We are happy to see that the unselfish services of our brother Pastor F. R. Webber have received this well-deserved recognition.

Concerning the Auburn Affirmation the *Presbyterian* of July 18 writes: "Many who signed this historic challenge to the importance of certain vital parts of Christian truth now heartily deplore their hasty action. Some have said so. Others, who have confessed it privately, would do well to make public their feelings. God has written 'Ichabod' over the doors of the seminary where this document was incubated. [This is a reference to the discontinuance of Auburn Seminary as an independent institution.—A.] It wanders like a ghost about the halls of another seminary that gave up the Presbyterian Church for the pottage of German new theology. [The writer here refers to Union Seminary, which has received Auburn Seminary under its roof.—A.]" Those that consider Modernism innocuous ought to see the handwriting on the wall.

Referring to an article in the *Walther League Messenger*, by Dr. W. A. Maier, on the subject "Don't Marry Outside the Church," the Jesuit weekly *America* says: "Our Lutheran friends, looking at this problem from their own angle, naturally enough, suggest as a remedy that promises be exacted from the Catholic party that the Lutheran faith

will be respected, that the marriage will be performed and all children be brought up in that Church. This stand is not surprising, as the Lutherans have always been the most rigid and logical of all the Protestant sects. They do indeed pay a compliment to our Catholic logic in keeping it to face what to them is a danger. And their stand is, in a sense, welcome to us; for it may perhaps serve to convince our Catholic youth that marriage with Protestants is simply not to be contemplated."

In England a Roman Catholic organization has been founded which terms itself "The League for God." This league now prints 70,000 leaflets each month. In justifying its existence, a writer in *America*, one of the promoters, says: "The terrible tragedy in England is that its people have grown shy of God. We found them not simply willing to listen to us talking about God but almost passionately interested in what we had to say. We found a people starved for God — though they themselves in many cases only faintly suspected it. The Reformation and the consequent discrediting of religion in England had robbed them of God, but they were extraordinarily anxious to meet Him again once He came their way." Is the Reformation at fault? How about the appalling religious indifference in Spain, on which we reported some time ago?

Mormons are at present engaged in forming a "stake" or diocese in Washington, D.C. We are told that this is the third "stake" east of the Mississippi. In Washington there are said to be about 3,000 Mormons. Who would believe that a delusion of this sort could spread so widely!

A shocking religious fraud has just been uncovered by Federal officers. It consists in the venture promoted by a certain Guy Ballard, who, assisted by his wife, termed "Joan of Arc," and a son, Donald, termed "Jesus" and "Lafayette," started the "Great I Am" ism and who made the claim that he had attained to a condition of self-immortality, through which he had overcome disease, death, etc. Recently the swindler died, but his widow continued the fraud, pretending that her husband had now "ascended" and become the equal of Jesus. One can hardly believe the statement made in the press that these swindlers succeeded in collecting more than three million dollars, asserting that their object in gathering funds was charity. Since they offered their followers the condition of self-immortality and sent this offer through the mails, the widow and her son have been arrested for fraudulent use of the mails.

The *Christian Century* (undenominational) prints this item: This nation's drink bill in 1939 was \$3,228,491,968, according to Mrs. Ida B. Wise Smith, president of the WCTU. This represents \$24.64 for each man, woman, and child in the country. There are now twice as many saloons as churches, and fifty per cent. more is spent for liquor than for education.

In Canada Jehovah's Witnesses, as we gather from the religious press, have been declared by the government to be an illegal organization. It seems they made themselves a nuisance. Whoever has had any dealings with these people, better known as Russellites, will agree that they are a human pest. Precisely on what grounds the Canadian authorities base their action we have not as yet heard.

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## Book Review — Literatur

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All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

**Shadow and Substance.** By Victor E. Hoven, M. A., B. D., D. D. The Bethany Press, St. Louis, Mo. 183 pages, 5½×7¾. Price, \$1.50.

Dr. Hoven is professor of Biblical Doctrine, Christian Evidences, and Hermeneutics, at the Northwest Christian College, Eugene, Oreg. His *Shadow and Substance* is the second product in the field of Old Testament research, the first being *The Purpose and Progress in Prophecy*. It is the fruit of the author's classroom work and, as the title explains, an attempt, thoroughgoing and, on the whole, successful, at presenting comprehensively, analyzing constructively, and relating minutely the vast material of Old Testament typical prophecy to the New Testament antitypical fulfillment in Christ's person, atonement, and the effects of His atonement. While, as the author himself states, his work is by no means exhaustive, the multitude, manifoldness, and variety of the types here set forth for study prove that God certainly foreshadowed the coming salvation events in a far higher degree and much richer measure than the average reader of the Old Testament usually realizes. Typical of the Savior and His salvation are *persons*, such as Adam, Abraham, Moses, etc.; *things*, the Tabernacle, the altar, the laver, etc.; *institutions*, sacrifices, feasts, etc.; *events*, the passing of Israel through the Red Sea; the wilderness journey, etc. We are sure that all who study this volume will derive from it benefits for their Christian faith; in particular they will become more firmly convinced of the paramount truth of such passages as Acts 10:43. Since this particular branch of Biblical study has been largely neglected in the Church, the book supplies a need.

At times, however, the author's statements challenge criticism. The typical application is frequently carried much too far, as, for example, when the manifestation of David to Israel by the slaying of Goliath is typically related to Christ's manifestation in the Jordan River, p. 78; or, when the washing of the priests at their induction into office is made to bring out lessons pertaining to the baptism of our Lord, p. 68. Whereas unbelieving critics find nothing in the Old Testament prophetic pictures, the apologist may see in them far more than they are designed to show. Again, when speaking of the three dispensations of religion in the Old Testament, the patriarchal, or family (?); the Mosaic, or national (?); and the Christian, or world-wide (?), the author is evidently misled into faulty distinctions. For instance, when he avers that in the patriarchal dispensation "the awful consequences of sin had not yet dawned upon the human mind," so that "the patriarchs walked with God. . . before the age of accountability" (p. X); or that "man arrived at the age of accountability (only) in the Mosaic age" (*ibid.*), this certainly is not in agreement with the scope of theology presented in Genesis. Then, too, it is wrong to try to prove from the narrow compass of Genesis the assumption that the saints of God in the antediluvian and the immediate

postdiluvian period possessed a very inadequate theology. Chemnitz's argument that oral revelation was at this time very full and rich is no doubt correct, and Luther's suggestion that Adam and his pious descendants were excellent theologians is worth while considering.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

**Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie.** Herausgegeben von D. A. Schlatter und D. W. Nitzert. 31. Band, 4. Heft: Das *Comma Iohanneum*. Ein nachgelassenes Werk von D. Eduard Riggenbach, verstorben Professor der Theologie in Basel. Druck und Verlag von C. Bertelsmann in Gütersloh. 43 Seiten 5¼ × 8½. Preis: M. 1.50.

Es ist, wie der Untertitel sagt, ein nachgelassenes Werk, das hier vorliegt. Der bekannte neutestamentliche Exeget Riggenbach ist am 4. Oktober 1927 in Basel, wo er Professor der Theologie war, gestorben. Diejenigen, die ihn kannten, nennen ihn einen edlen, frommen Mann, und aus den Schriften, die wir von ihm gelesen haben, haben wir ihn als einen gelehrten, scharfsinnigen Theologen kennen gelernt. Und das Merkwürdige war, daß er blind war, nur sieben Jahre die Schule besuchen konnte und als vollständig erblindeter Mann seine Forschungen des Neuen Testaments getrieben und einen angesehenen Namen in der gelehrten Welt sich erworben hat. Ein Riesengedächtnis, eine ungeheure Willenskraft und eine ungewöhnliche Begabung standen ihm zu Gebote. Den griechischen Text des Neuen Testaments wußte er vollständig auswendig. Natürlich brauchte er beständig einen Vorleser, der ihm wohl neun Stunden täglich wissenschaftliche Werke vorlesen mußte. Dabei wird an ihm besondere Demut und Bescheidenheit, Arbeitswürdigkeit und Opferwilligkeit gerühmt. Eins seiner bedeutendsten Werke ist der umfassende Kommentar zum Hebräerbrief in Zahns großem Kommentarwerk zum Neuen Testament, eine tüchtige Auslegung, wenn man auch nicht allen seinen Ausführungen zustimmen kann. Er hat namentlich den Zweck des Hebräerbriefs recht herausgearbeitet und nachgewiesen, wie man dieses in der Gegenwart wieder so umstrittene biblische Buch nur dann recht verstehen kann, wenn man es für die Schrift eines um das Heil seiner Gemeinde bangenden Seelsorgers hält. Zuletzt war Riggenbach mit der Auslegung der Johannesbriefe, ebenfalls für Zahns Kommentarwerk, beschäftigt, hat jedoch diese Arbeit nicht vollenden können, obwohl er bis zuletzt daran arbeitete. Seine letzten Worte waren: „Wie herrlich, der Vergebung seiner Sünden gewiß zu sein!“ und: „Wie freue ich mich aufs Licht!“ Dann legte er sich ruhig hin und entschlief. Obwohl er seine Auslegung der Johannesbriefe also nicht hat zu Ende bringen können — er hat immer langsam, gründlich und mit peinlicher Sorgfalt und Gewissenhaftigkeit die Vorarbeiten getan —, so fand sich doch in seinem Nachlaß die hier vorliegende Untersuchung über das sogenannte *Comma Iohanneum*, 1 Joh. 5, 7, abgeschlossen und völlig druckfertig vor. Es ist ja bekannt, daß die Echtheit dieser Stelle von den drei himmlischen Zeugen zu den am meisten umstrittenen Problemen der neutestamentlichen Textkritik gehört. Luther hat in allen von ihm selbst veranstalteten Ausgaben seiner deutschen Bibelübersetzung das *Comma Iohanneum* weggelassen, hat also offenbar die Stelle nicht für echt gehalten, und das ist auch das fast einstimmige Urteil der modernen Textkritik. Von namhaften Vertretern sind nur John Mill (1707) und J. A. Bengel (*Apparatus Criticus*, 1734; *Gnomon*, 1742) für die Echtheit eingetreten, und im 19. Jahrhundert haben unter den Protestanten wohl nur noch J. Sander und W. Kölling die Stelle verteidigt. Alle die Gründe pro et contra kommen in dieser Schrift zur Sprache, und Riggenbach schließt seine Untersuchung mit den Worten, daß das *Comma Iohanneum* „unter seinen Um-

ständen mehr ein Heimatrecht im Schriftbeweis hat, nachdem als sicheres Resultat der Forschung feststeht, daß es keinen ursprünglichen Bestandteil des Neuen Testaments darstellt, sondern erst um die Wende des 3. und 4. Jahrhunderts in den Bibeltext eingedrungen ist". (S. 43.) V. Fürbringer

**The Faith by which the Church Lives.** By Georgia Harkness. The Abingdon Press. 1940. 161 pages, 7½×5. Price, \$1.50.

Dr. Macfarland, discussing one of Dr. Harkness's books, says: "It is heartening these days to find professors of philosophy in our colleges giving sympathetic study to religion, not simply in its intellectual aspects but as the guide of life." (*Trends of Christian Thinking*, p. 159.) At that time our author taught philosophy in Elmira College; she is now Professor of Applied Theology at Garrett Biblical Institute. The Foreword of the present volume states: "The philosopher and the Christian mingle in this author, and the combination has resulted in a stimulating book." To us the book is interesting in that it exemplifies the truth that, when philosophy and Christian theology are mixed, nothing is left of theology and little of philosophy. We are not interested in showing that Liberalism (not only radical Liberalism but also "evangelical Liberalism," for which Dr. Harkness stands) does away with all the essentials of the Christian faith. We all know that. But it will prove interesting to study the method which the Liberal employs to determine what the Christian faith is. Our book employs a most unphilosophical method. What is the basis of our faith? "Within historic Christianity there have been five main sources of authority. These are: the Church, the Bible, the world of nature, the Holy Spirit, and the person of Jesus Christ, that is, the life and teachings of Jesus." (Pp. 52, 62.) All of these five sources are of value, but none is in itself sufficient. The Bible is not absolutely reliable. "The humanly crude must be sorted out from the divinely pure in the message of the Bible." "Let us admit the inaccuracy and inadequacy of the gospel records. The pages of the synoptic gospels are clouded over with the dust of first-century Jewish-Christian thought." "The disregard of historical and scientific fact that ensues from belief in its literal inspiration is the other great pitfall of reliance on the authority of the Bible." "The majestic creation myth with which the Old Testament opens was written late, in the priestly, postexilic, era." "Much of what is recorded as the resurrection story is poetry and high mythology." The Bible cannot therefore serve as the ultimate authority. All five sources of authority should be used, but we need a guide to show us the truth in these five sources; we need "to make a synthesis of these approaches under some guiding principle that can unite them all. That is what an evangelical Liberalism attempts to do. It can be done. The guiding principle to be applied to each of these bases of authority is *the mind of Christ*." (P. 66.) Now, making "the mind of Christ" the supreme authority in religion is a most unphilosophical procedure. In the first place, the philosopher bases his system on some well-established, universally accepted truth. He may be wrong in many of his deductions, but unless he begins with, and operates with, a known, irrefutable, certain, well-defined principle, he has no standing in philosophy. But the concept underlying the principle of the philosophy of religion presented in our



book is absolutely devoid of clarity, definiteness, certainty. What is this "mind of Christ" which sorts out the humanly crude in the Bible from the divinely pure? "By the mind of Christ I do not mean solely the personality and mood of the man of Nazareth. . . . The fact of a *living and abiding Christ* is one of the bed-rock foundations of our faith. . . . Yet the indwelling spiritual Christ is not the only foundation of our faith. Without an historical Jesus there would have been no continuing Christ. . . . What I have been saying is that the mind of Christ includes both the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith. . . . In Jesus Christ, in so far as we can read His message aright, is our ultimate authority." (P. 67 f.) So, then, the "living and abiding spiritual Christ" is our final authority. But where are His judgments definitely and unmistakably recorded? In this book of Dr. Harkness? Is the "mind of Christ" revealed to us through the mind of this or that philosopher or theologian? As Dr. Harkness reads the "mind of Christ," the resurrection story is to a great extent mythological and the concept of the true deity of Christ belongs to the dust of first-century, Jewish-Christian thought. Others know that the mind of Christ speaks differently. Who is to judge which is the right interpretation of the "mind of Christ"? Dr. Harkness? She is philosopher enough not to claim this. Each man is entitled to his own opinion. And that means that to make the "mind of Christ" the ultimate authority is subjectivism pure and simple. And this concept, "the mind of Christ," is too elusive to serve as the basis of any kind of real philosophy. Our author admits that herself. "I have said that for our ultimate authority we must look to the mind of Christ and that here we find the index to the proper use of every other kind of Christian authority. I have not claimed that here we find any meter-stick, any infallible rule or mechanically applicable guide, to Christian belief or action." (P. 74.) No infallible rule! If this be philosophy, it is at bottom the philosophy of skepticism.

In the second place, we would hardly want to call that a sane philosophy which represents the "mind of Christ," first, as being acquired chiefly by means of the Bible and its Gospel-message ("I do not find, save in the Bible, the assurance of a God who is Father and Redeemer"; the Bible needs to be "emphasized as the primary basis of our faith," pp. 55, 59), and then, secondly, as assuming mastery over the Bible, as "sorting out the humanly crude from the divinely pure in the message of the Bible." (P. 70.) This sort of philosophy asks us to let the effect regulate the cause. If the Bible teaches anything, it teaches that Jesus is true God, who saved us through His substitutionary atonement. But the "mind of Christ" as speaking in our book cannot bring itself to call Jesus God. It will call Him Lord, it will call Him a godlike man, it will even call Him the Son of God, but never God. In fact, "I do not propose to try to set forth any abstract doctrine of the divinity of Christ." (P. 95.) And "the terms atonement, justification by faith, etc., are barren abstractions." (P. 101.) "The ordinary connotation of grace as naturalness and winsomeness comes closer to its Christian meaning than does the implication of a propitiation or substitution theory of the atonement, that salvation had to be wrested from any unwilling God by the blood of



Christ." (P. 155.) The Bible-message produces the "mind of Christ," and then the "mind of Christ" denies the Bible-message!

We meet other presentations and statements which do not proceed from a philosophical mind. For instance: "As for the Bible, most people, at least most people sufficiently informed to be ministers of the Gospel, recognize the dangers inherent in the proof-text method. It is a truism that one can prove anything one likes from the Bible. In the last Presidential election there was plastered in every New York subway train as a party slogan the affirmation 'You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' One doubts whether during the Christian era there has ever been a notion, wise or foolish, that has not been defended by some one on the authority of this word. . . . What minister is there who has not made up a sermon according to his own ideas and then picked a text to justify it?" (P. 56.) The purpose of this paragraph is to discredit the proof-text method — the only method applicable. The philosophers call the argumentation here employed sophistry.

Philosophy aside, we call attention to the following statements and expressions: "At the Madras Conference I heard an American delegate declare that Paul understood the Gospel better than our Lord, for he had witnessed the crucifixion and the resurrection while Jesus had not. *Here is a statement worth pondering.*" (P. 65. Italics ours.) — "The democracy of the Gospel. . . . The Christian ideal of democracy. . . . Democracy and evangelism meet." The Church must "promote the democratic ideal within the State." And even this: "Predestination itself is an undemocratic concept." (Chapter IV.) — We cannot understand how the "mind of Christ" could characterize the words "gentle Jesus, meek and mild" as an "infantilism which we have carried over from our childhood" or could use the expression "the grandfatherly God of our childhood." (Pp. 87, 138.)

We subscribe to statements like these: "You can find God in nature, but you can find the nature of God only in the Bible." — "More stress should be laid upon participation in political action as a religious vocation. . . . The choicest young men and women rather than aspiring shysters should be choosing politics as a life enterprise." (Pp. 59, 128.)

TH. ENGELDER

**Christian Faith and the Spirit of the Age.** By Clarence E. Macartney. American Tract Society, 7 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y. 236 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.50.

This appealing book was selected by the American Tract Society Prize Committee for the second prize of \$500 in its recent Christian book contest. And deservedly so, for Dr. Macartney submitted to it a fine apologetic on the Christian faith, offering in his usual interesting style and fascinating manner of presentation the "History of the Bible" — its origin, unity, inspiration, credibility, and its fulfilled predictions; the Christian way — Christianity's perfect ethics and solution of every-day problems; the Christian Act — Christ's reconciling, conquering death; the Christian Destiny — the believer's life on earth and his glorified life in heaven. We recommend this latest book of the well-known Presbyterian author chiefly on account of its high apologetic value, its beautiful style, and its excellent approach. But the reader must exercise caution.

While, for example, the writer concedes and defends the inspiration of the Bible, he distinguishes between three kinds of inspiration: superintendence, elevation, and suggestion, thus destroying the very concept of inspiration, confusing the entire doctrine, and opening the door for liberal views. Whether he is a millennialist does not appear from his somewhat ambiguous language. As a sample of his often obscure writing we offer the following: "If a beam of light which travels at the rate of 672,000,000 miles an hour were to set out on a journey round the universe, it would never accomplish its goal, for the universe grows more rapidly than light could travel." (P. 205.) Is Dr. Macartney an evolutionist, who believes in any further growth and development of the universe? At any rate, he often mediates between Christian confessionalism and liberal concessionism. These faults, however, need not bar the book from judicious pastors' libraries; for whenever Dr. Macartney opposes modern unbelief by actual Christian evidence, or whenever he employs his often stunning illustrations in the interest of divine truth, he manifests a mastership which because of its very excellence deserves close scrutiny and imitation.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

**The Art of Prayer.** By Rev. William Bruce Walker. American Tract Society, New York, N. Y. 272 pages, 5¼×8. Price, \$1.50.

God's command, His promise, and our own urgent need ought to constrain every Christian to pray much more frequently and fervently than he does. To stimulate such frequent and fervent prayer is the author's purpose. But he gives to prayer a greater power than the Word of God permits. Throughout his book he treats prayer as a means of grace, the means of strengthening our faith, our spiritual life. To mention only one example, in chap. XX the author speaks of the certainties to which Paul had attained, the certainty of having a mighty Savior, of having a loving Father ordering his life, of a happy home awaiting him beyond the grave, and then he sums up: "How assuring to read of a man who found some things that were certain! Paul reached his certainties through prayer and long waitings before the Lord. Truly prayer changes things — also it changes persons." P. 238. No; Paul did not reach these certainties through prayer, but through faith in the Word of God, which revealed, offered, granted, and sealed to him all the certainties. After Paul had reached the certainty that he had a mighty Savior, after he had been changed, converted, we read: "Behold, he prayeth," Acts 9:11. Surely, Paul asked God to strengthen his faith and conviction, but God did that by means of His Word and Sacrament. For this reason Paul commends the pastors of Ephesus "to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified," Acts 20:32. To pray for certainty, for strength, for sanctification, and to fail to make use of those means which God has appointed for this purpose, the Gospel, His saving and strengthening and sanctifying Word, is not praying in accordance with God's will. And to place another means of grace side by side with the only means appointed by God is arrogating to oneself a right which belongs exclusively to the Author and Finisher of our faith and salvation. Keeping this fact in mind, and remembering that the author writes from the Reformed viewpoint, one may find his book profitable reading.

TH. LAETSCH

**Proceedings of the Second Convention of the Southeastern District of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, 1940.** 77 pages, 5¾×8¾. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price, 26 cts.

This report offers two essays based on Dr. Walther's classic *The Proper Form of an Evangelical Lutheran Congregation*. Pastor Geo. E. Mennen's paper, dealing with the rights and duties of the congregation, is based on chap. III and V of this book, while Pastor E. F. Leonhardt delivered a very interesting essay on "Congregational Meetings," based on the material outlined in chap. III, §§ 12—19 and 43—51.

Looking over the business reports, one is impressed with the necessity and wisdom of organizing this new District. May God continue to grant His blessing in an even greater measure to the work of our brethren. The following resolutions on an equalization plan, adopted by the convention in order to take care of the traveling expenses incurred in connection with the District conventions and pastoral conferences, will interest our readers.

"1. That every communicant member of the District be asked to contribute 10 cents per annum for the District mileage fund to the District Treasurer and that delegates coming to the convention by rail be refunded their actual fare (pastors, clergy rate; laymen, coach rate); that drivers of cars be allowed 2 cents per mile and an additional 1 cent a mile for each additional passenger and that passengers of private cars be allowed no refund when or where such private cars cause duplication. In the event of a surplus we recommend that this money be retained in the District mileage treasury;

"2. That each congregation remit for the mileage fund to the District Treasurer thirty days before the pastoral conference in the fall, and that the District Treasurer be authorized to send statements to the congregational treasurers on or about September 1."

TH. LAETSCH

**Statistical Year-Book of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1939.** Concordia Publishing House. 240 pages. Price, net, \$1.00.

This book, a copy of which is furnished free of charge to every congregation of our Synod, contains so much valuable information that it is an indispensable tool for every pastor. An innovation which will be found particularly useful is a list of all stations served by the Missouri Synod, showing District affiliation and indexing the pastor serving the congregation or station. From the summary of the Reports of the District Presidents we glean the following item: Candidates installed during 1939, 105; resignations and deaths of pastors in the active ministry, 99; (70 resignations, 29 deaths). Quite evidently the candidate question is still far from a satisfactory solution.

TH. LAETSCH

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

**The Trebalto Collection.** Two-part and Three-part Choir Numbers. Mostly for Use in Church Service. No. 113: "Benediction." By J. C. Wohlfeil. 2 pages. Price, 10 cts.